

*"Today we are faced with the pre-eminent fact that, if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace."*

*From a speech prepared the day before his death, by PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, for delivery over the air to the Jefferson Day dinners, April 14, 1945.*

# COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

*By* WAYNE McMILLEN

PROFESSOR IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO; ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE  
COMMUNITY AND WAR FUND OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO, INC.,  
AND MANAGER OF ITS SUBURBAN DIVISION; COMMISSIONER AND  
VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY

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TO  
MRS. CLARIBEL HENRY McMILLEN  
OF SANBORN • O'BRIEN COUNTY • IOWA  
FIRST WOMAN MEMBER OF THE  
O'BRIEN COUNTY WELFARE BOARD  
IN WHOSE HOME THIS BOOK  
WAS WRITTEN





## PREFACE

SEVERAL years ago, when serving as chairman of Section III (Community Organization) of the National Conference of Social Work, I received a suggestion for a new approach to our year's work. George Rabinoff, then of New York and now in Chicago, proposed that our committee organize study groups in several cities, asking them to formulate a definition of the concept "community organization." He pointed out that there appeared to be little agreement as to the implications of the term and that clarification was needed. The members of the program committee agreed. As a result, committees in six cities devoted considerable attention during the ensuing year to this assignment. Their reports were collated at the annual conference in 1939 and a written synthesis<sup>1</sup> was effected.

All of the participants thought this experience had been provocative and that some clarification had resulted. There was agreement that the experiment should be continued. Thus was launched a co-operative analysis which is still under way, though activity has necessarily been somewhat slowed down in recent years because of the added obligations imposed upon all members of the group by the war emergency. Considerable material has been circulated among the members of the study group and statements have been published that appear to indicate progress toward the objective originally envisaged.

Some attention had been given to this problem even before Mr. Rabinoff's suggestion launched the Conference committee on its study project. The American Association of Schools of Social Work has a very practical reason for being concerned to solve it. At present, courses in community organization are offered in some forty schools which are members of the Association and also in a number of nonmember colleges and universities. Those who teach these courses wish to serve the needs of the students and of the profession by refining and improving the content of their offerings. Some early exploratory inquiries revealed wide variations in the materials presented in the various schools under the same title. Consequently, the Association has periodically organized committees to study this problem and to make recommendations. In recent years, activity on this assignment has been fairly continuous. A committee, headed by Professor Ar-

<sup>1</sup> This written statement is included in this volume as Doc. 1-A (pp. 37-50).

thur Dunham of the University of Michigan, has made available to the teachers of community organization some materials which have been very helpful.

There are grounds for believing that these continuing interchanges have considerably reduced the differences in the content of the courses offered in the various schools. However, Professor Dunham thinks that much remains to be done. In a recent report to the members of the committee, he said: "In spite of a growing degree of integration of thinking about the subject, there are some basic differences of philosophy which are reflected in courses and in group discussions. Various teachers have different concepts of the essential nature of community organization for social work. . . . However, even courses reflecting these varying points of view contain much similar material. The differences in philosophy are perhaps not much greater than variations in thinking which may be found in the areas of case work and group work teaching, respectively, and these philosophical differences do not prevent a large degree of practical cooperation." On another occasion, Professor Dunham said to the members of the committee that, for the immediate future, it would be very helpful if a new textbook on community organization could be published at least once in every five years.

Professor Dunham's challenge was a persuasive factor in inducing me to undertake a task I had been considering for several years. The time seemed ripe to put into print some of the materials I had been using in teaching courses in community organization. My participation in the work, both of the National Conference committee and of Professor Dunham's committee, not only had made the writing of a new textbook seem an important next step, but it had also, by clarifying some of the uncharted areas, made the task appear somewhat less formidable.

My contacts with the two committees revealed, among other things, that the interests of students of community organization tend to separate them into two schools. One group is primarily concerned to evaluate the concrete methods used in the day-to-day job of those engaged in community organization. The other group is primarily interested in analyzing group behavior and in identifying the determinants that influence its course. Perhaps this divergence is not without its values. Beginners certainly need to know the specific procedures now utilized by practitioners of community organization. In addition, there is need for continuous probing into the psychology of groups. Procedures can be applied with increasing effectiveness as evidence indicates more definitely the cause-and-effect relationships that produce modifications in group attitudes. Hence, though

students of community organization need to learn procedures, they also need to acquire such insights as we now have relative to the psychological processes of groups.

The basic material in this book rests very largely upon my personal experiences in the field of social work. Those experiences began more than twenty-five years ago, shortly after the close of World War I. At that time, like most beginners, I tended to consider each new problem unique. But successive experiences have a way of grouping themselves, sooner or later, into patterns; and, once the patterns begin to take shape, subsequent practice and observation are likely to be used as a means of testing their worth. As this process continues, something ultimately evolves that approximates a body of principles, generalizations, and methods. Perhaps I would never have attempted to analyze my own experiences and to arrange them for presentation if I had not gravitated into the field of teaching. But in the classroom I found myself constantly reaching back into the record I had accumulated in the field of practice to seek answers to the questions raised in discussions with students.

There was a great jumble of material in the record. The decade following World War I was a period of phenomenal expansion in social work. Community chests and councils of social agencies were being organized in rapid succession throughout the country. Rural communities were being introduced—many of them for the first time—to the purposes and methods of modern social work through the newly created field service of the American Red Cross. Professional education was beginning to attain mature stature, as far-seeing leaders, both in the social agencies and in the schools, envisaged new means of equipping the oncoming generation of practitioners for the responsibilities they would presently be called upon to assume. In a few places there were even evidences of a will to create modern public welfare services at the local level. These and other leavening developments of the 1920's came at an opportune time. Very few of us realized then how important they were. Without them the country would have been disastrously unequipped to cope with the economic catastrophe that struck in the autumn of 1929. The accomplishments of the preceding years had at least provided a base from which emergency operations could be launched.

I remember seeing once a very amusing cookbook written specifically for brides. Each recipe was not less explicit than this: "Into a *clean* bowl, break a *fresh* egg. . . ." Some of the pages of this manuscript may seem to be almost equally guilty of elaborating the obvious. But the primary purpose of this book is to be useful to beginners. A former student once said

to me: "I was glad to have the definite suggestions in my class notes to consult when I was getting ready for the first meeting of my board in A—— County." Testimony of this type encourages the belief that there will be some at least who will not resent my effort to set forth very concrete suggestions for their consideration.

The actual preparation of this text involved the co-operation of numerous friends and professional associates. Foremost among these was Pierce Atwater, executive director of the Community Fund of Chicago. The first draft of this book was completed, fortunately, prior to Mr. Atwater's death in March, 1944. He read the entire manuscript and offered many valuable suggestions. But his contribution to this text extends far beyond the reading of the manuscript. He had a genuinely creative mind which was constantly reaching out to find better ways of relating group resources to community needs. In a close personal friendship extending over almost twenty years, I enjoyed many opportunities to discuss with him our mutual professional interests. It is obviously not possible to measure the extent to which exposure to his ideas influenced the development of the views set forth in this book.

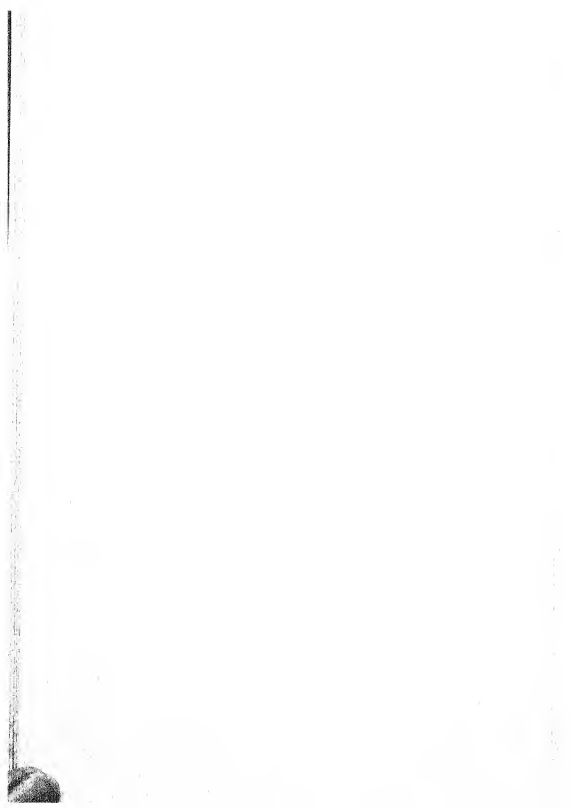
I also acknowledge my great indebtedness to Dr. Arlien Johnson, dean of the Graduate School of Social Work of the University of Southern California. Dr. Johnson's rich experiences, both in the practice of community organization and in teaching, were generously brought to bear upon this manuscript. She read the entire text and submitted many discriminating comments which were freely drawn upon in revising the original draft.

In addition, specific chapters have been improved as a result of comments submitted by persons specially qualified to evaluate them. Chapter ix ("Public Relations and Community Organization") was read by Lieutenant Albert Earl Deemer, formerly in charge of public relations activities in the Jewish Children's Bureau of Chicago, now serving in the Armed Forces of the United States; chapter xii ("The Social Service Exchange") by Miss Mary L. Thompson, formerly director of the Social Service Exchange in Chicago; chapter xiii ("Local Organizations for Joint Financing and for Joint Planning") by Dr. Mary Stanton, formerly director of the Los Angeles Council of Social Agencies; chapter xv ("State-wide Planning and Co-ordinating Agencies") by Howard L. Russell, formerly secretary of Public Assistance in Pennsylvania and at present director of the American Public Welfare Association. Each of the various sections of chapter xvi ("National Agencies Concerned with Co-ordination and Social Planning") has been checked for inaccuracies by someone closely identified with the agency under consideration. To all of these persons I acknowl-

edge my indebtedness, though I myself assume full responsibility for any errors in fact or in judgment that may still remain in the text. I am also under obligation to Dr. Walter Friedlander, formerly director of public welfare in Berlin and now a member of the faculty of the School of Social Welfare of the University of California, for assistance in translating the German statutes (Doc. 13-F); and to those persons who have permitted their published materials to be used here as documents. In addition, the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago has graciously made available to me from time to time the valued secretarial assistance of Mrs. Eleanor Hull, Mrs. Mary L. Slayton, and Miss Doris Smith (now serving in the Waves). Mrs. Edith Corsario has also been of great assistance in helping with the typescript. The generous help of Mrs. Claribel H. McMillen enormously lightened the burden of preparing the Index. I am likewise very grateful to Mrs. Doris Force Flowers and to Miss Mary D. Alexander, of the University of Chicago Press, for valued advice and aid in piloting the manuscript through the successive stages of publication.

WAYNE McMILLEN

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
July 1, 1945



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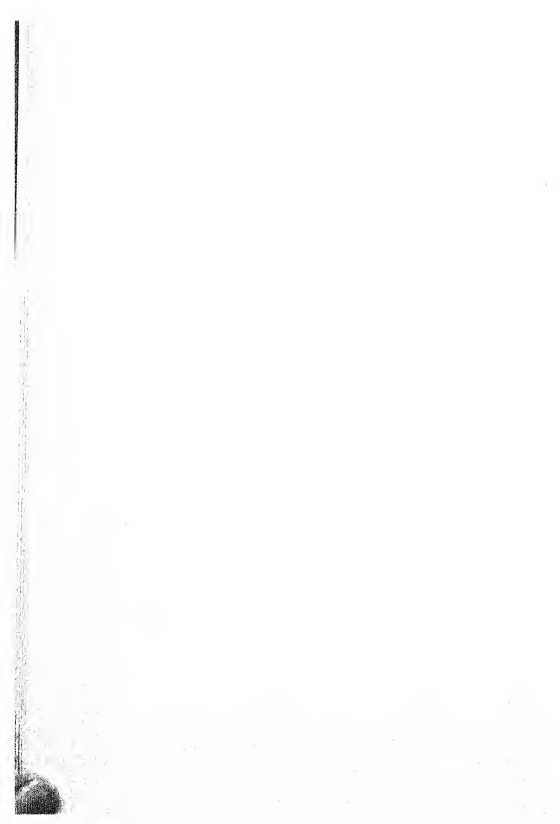
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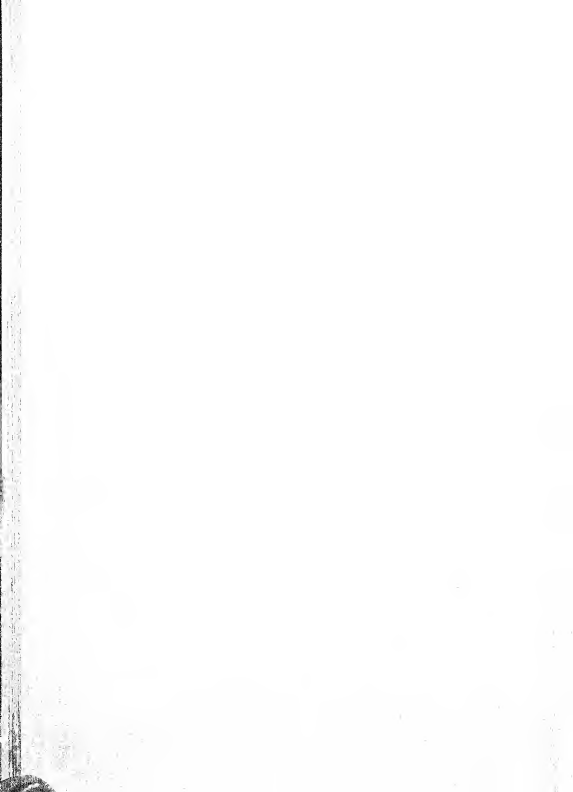



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*PART I*  
PROCESS





## CHAPTER I

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION—A PROCESS IN SOCIAL WORK



THE practice of social work involves both the exercise of specific skills and the mastery of areas of learning germane to those skills. Thus far the processes of social work in which need for skill is recognized are: (1) social case work, (2) social group work, (3) community organization. The areas of learning required for the successful exercise of these skills are numerous, including substantial segments of the biological and social sciences, as well as certain elements in other professional disciplines—particularly medicine and law. Undoubtedly, as the profession matures, additional skills may be recognized and developed, and the framework of knowledge within which professional practice is carried on will be amended to keep pace with changing needs.

Vigorous development in any profession appears to be dependent upon specialization. Medical science has provided conspicuous evidence on this point. Physicians have increasingly devoted their energies to the study and treatment of problems in one limited sector of the total field. As a result, great progress has been made, which has been beneficial not only to those in need of expert care but also to the profession as a whole. Improvements in any one area filter through to other physicians—to general practitioners as well as to specialists—and the entire field of practice is correspondingly enriched.

Specialization in social work has already produced constructive results of similar character, even though the field itself is very new. Of course, social work functions have been performed for centuries, usually as a collateral activity in another professional field. Vincent de Paul in the seventeenth century, Count Rumford in the eighteenth century, Thomas Chalmers in the nineteenth century, and many others thought of their work as "charity," "care of the poor," or "the abatement of pauperism."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a description of the work of these men see Frank D. Watson, *The Charity Organization Movement in the United States* (1922).

But an examination of their works reveals many of the elements of the three processes that have since been recognized as distinct, though inter-related, specialties in the practice of social work. The identification of these collateral activities of the older professions as a field in need of independent study and cultivation was a step of prime importance, because it made possible the kind of growth that can best be achieved through specialization.

Social case work was the first of these processes to be singled out for careful analysis and intensive development. This process is now extensively utilized in many fields and in many kinds of institutions in which social work is practiced—in child welfare, in family welfare, in hospitals, clinics, courts, and schools. In the past it has overshadowed the other processes of social work to such an extent that some people have thought case work and social work were synonyms.

Social group work and community organization are more recent developments. They are therefore less well understood and less widely recognized than social case work. Among professional social workers, however, there is now a persistent effort to develop these two processes. Social workers know that the total field of practice will benefit from improved mastery of any of the constituent specialties. Moreover, they understand that, in any professional practice, specialization must rest upon generic knowledge. The pediatrician must know something about psychiatry, internal medicine, and other areas of medical practice, if only to identify situations in which the services of a specialist are required. In like manner any social worker, however specialized his field, is frequently confronted with situations in which he needs to understand and to utilize more than one of the recognized processes of social work.

#### TERMINOLOGY

Among the many obstacles hampering any new professional development is the lack of accepted terminology. It is difficult to exchange views, to criticize theories, and to evaluate experiments until there is some degree of certainty that the terms used have comparable meanings. This difficulty is encountered at every step in discussing problems of community organization. Perhaps it is not necessary to devise an elaborate set of terms in order to perfect a professional process. It is obviously essential, however, that there be some agreement as to the nature of the process itself. In the ensuing paragraphs an effort will be made, first, to exclude certain meanings sometimes given to the phrase "community organization" and, second, to indicate the significance of the term as used in this book.

Very often "community organization" is used to designate a field of social work. Those who employ the term in this way are usually thinking of agencies and programs—particularly of councils of social agencies, community chests, and other organizations that engage in fact-finding and promotional activity. Competent observers now seem agreed that this use of the term is confusing. Community organization is a process rather than a type of agency or a program. As a process, it is utilized, in varying degrees, in every type of social agency and in conjunction with various kinds of programs. Agencies operate within a framework, and programs try to follow patterns. The community organization process operates within many kinds of frameworks, both inside and outside the field of social work, and it pervades and animates widely divergent kinds of programs.

This confusion of a process with a field has occurred, not only with respect to community organization, but also with respect to case work and group work. It is not uncommon to hear references, even today, to "the field of case work" or "the field of group work." Yet none of these three processes of social work is a "field" in the sense that child welfare or recreation is a field. Child welfare and recreation are fields in which one of the three processes of social work may predominate but in which all three may often be used. Councils of social agencies are organizations in the field of social planning. They utilize not only the community organization process but also, at least occasionally, the other social work processes in the carrying-out of their assignments. The fact that one process is used more extensively than another in a particular agency does not justify the assumption that use of the process is restricted to agencies of that particular type. Instances may be found in which the council of social agencies makes less extensive and less successful use of the community organization process than some of its member-organizations that operate in specific functional fields, such as child welfare or family welfare.

"Community organization" is also sometimes used in a static sense to refer to the existing pattern of social services in a given area. Thus one may sometimes hear such statements as this: "Community organization for child welfare is very poor in this city." Further inquiry usually reveals that the speaker means there is no adequate program in his community for the care of children. But a description of what exists is an inventory. The effort to alter the situation involves a process—and the process involved is community organization. Directories of social agencies contain lists of the organizations operating in the community and descriptions of their programs. These lists may suggest some of the results that have been achieved through the community organization process. But the descrip-



tion of the field at any given time is an evidence of the success or failure of the process; it is not the process itself.

These variant uses of the term "community organization" have been, and to some extent continue to be, a source of confusion. There is evidence, however, that this difficulty is diminishing. "Community organization" is increasingly used to refer to a process. This delimitation of the term means that other terminology should be employed in referring to the specific fields in which community organization is a dominant process. The existing pattern of social services in a given locality usually provides numerous channels through which all the social work processes may operate; hence, no single segment of this pattern should be identified with any one of the processes to which it lends form.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE PROCESS

The basic concern of all the social work processes is the human being—both as an individual and in his relationships in groups. The competitive drives are strong in human beings as they are in all forms of life. But these drives are greatly modified by countervailing drives that are particularly strongly marked in human beings. Prominent among these are pride in the group to which the individual belongs and a sense of responsibility for its welfare; a complex of altruistic impulses that inspire action in behalf of the welfare of others; and a desire for the satisfactions that spring from group or co-operative undertakings. These drives are strong—so strong, in fact, that the human being, both as an individual and in his group relationships, commonly experiences an urgent desire to rectify matters when he finds himself confronted by situations which he *recognizes* as cruel, unjust, or inimical to human development. The word "*recognizes*" is important in this connection, for conditions that are tolerated without protest for long periods of time may become suddenly the stimulus for aggressive action, once their harmful or unjust character is understood.

The primary objective of the community organization process is to help people to find ways to give expression to these inherent desires to improve the environment in which they and their fellows must carry on their lives. But it is clear that most individuals experience repeated frustrations if they attempt single-handed to attack environmental factors which they believe to be inimical to the general welfare. Moreover, the desire to work co-operatively with others is a well-marked human trait. The community organization process recognizes both of these facts, first, by encouraging *co-operative* effort and, second, by orienting these efforts toward objectives related to the common welfare. Thus, as a rule, in its practical working-

out, community organization involves relationships between and among groups; for the individual finds need of the group relationship in expressing his own feelings in this area and the group, in turn, usually proceeds in terms of attempting to stimulate other groups. Because these relationships among groups are so conspicuous and so important in community organization, it has been suggested that the process itself should be called "intergroup work."<sup>2</sup> Although a good case can be made for this suggestion, tradition and inertia are strong, and it would appear at present that "community organization" will continue to be used to describe the process of helping people to relate themselves to the group quest for social integration.

It is clear that an unoriented drive is likely to be unproductive. Community organization therefore strives to help individuals and groups to find common objectives toward which their energies can be directed. This involves the providing of means by which individuals may identify with groups in the interest of enhancing the effectiveness of their personal contribution. It also involves the establishing of channels through which groups may communicate and react upon one another. The extent to which these relationships are effectively developed is one measure of the success of the community organization process.

Let us illustrate by reference to a specific problem—public housing. At present there is widespread indifference, ignorance, and hostility toward public housing. There are some groups, however, genuinely concerned about the state of housing in the community and eager to find ways to remedy the situation. If, over a period of years, an increasing number of groups become concerned about substandard housing and if they find a plan of action which most of them will support, it may be assumed that communication of group with group has been effective and that, in this one area at least, increased integration of community life has resulted. As the community organization process bears fruit, a newly identified problem in group life becomes widely understood more quickly than formerly, and the opportunities for achieving a planned program of action are correspondingly enlarged.

Communities are very unevenly developed with respect to community organization. In part, at least, this is because the drives upon which the community organization process depends manifest themselves, whether they are stimulated and guided or not. If these drives are co-ordinated, progress is likely to follow. If they spend themselves unproductively because of lack of leadership, the development of the community may lag.

<sup>2</sup> See Doc. 1-C, pp. 59-67.

The urge to express feelings through group action may result in a confusing multiplicity of groups within the community with little or no communication of thought or co-ordination of action among them. Where this situation exists, the community is said to be "overorganized." On the other hand, a community is "underorganized" if there is no channel through which individuals and groups can give expression to a common impulse. A great deal of public begging in a community does not necessarily mean that people are indifferent to the needs of the poor. It might mean that, although the desire to help the poor is widespread, no basis for effective joint action has as yet been developed.

The community organization process is used, consciously or unconsciously, in many fields of human activity—in politics, in art, in education, in economic life. Whenever individuals and groups seek ways to pool their resources and efforts to achieve an improvement in group life, the community organization process is at work. Thus a movement to build a superhighway, to create an institute of fine arts, to establish a county fair, or to amend the state constitution usually involves deliberate efforts to attain agreement and unity of purpose. In most of these fields the leaders do not think in terms of the community organization process. They know that as a practical matter the project in which they are interested needs support, and they seek to muster this support.

In his role as a citizen, the social worker's obligation toward the total development of the community is the same as that of any other citizen. In his professional capacity, however, he recognizes that community organization is one of the components of social work practice. Hence he has a special obligation to foster the community organization process in the fields in which social work is practiced. Although the limits of these fields change as new needs arise, social work practice, in general, is concerned to assist people in their efforts to avoid or to escape from poverty, delinquency, and illness and to achieve satisfactions in their social relationships. Community organization in social work therefore seeks to assist people to find effective ways of acting in co-operation with others to improve social welfare provisions.

#### COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESS

It has long been agreed that, in the practice of social work, it is usually unwise and may often be definitely destructive to yield to the temptation to relieve individuals and groups of the responsibilities they should properly carry themselves. This principle holds true in community organization no less than in the other processes of social work. The professional social

worker desires to evoke in people—particularly in their group relationships—a positive, inquiring attitude toward social welfare problems and to assist them in giving effective expression to their altruistic drives. In doing this the social worker stands ready to provide many of the means used. He will, for example, compile facts, prepare publicity materials, analyze reports, summarize statutes, and in other ways assist the groups with whom he is working. But he is careful not to relieve them of their responsibilities. They are the ones who, in the final analysis, should seek and supply answers to such questions as these:

1. How may we identify the social needs of the community?
2. How may we establish priorities among these needs?
3. What methods are most successful in formulating programs to meet identified needs?
4. What procedures are most promising in promoting the adoption of the programs that have been formulated?

The professional component of the community organization process in social work is thus twofold. The social worker is concerned (1) to stimulate people to use their powers for the co-operative improvement of group life and (2) to assist in the development of the process by supplying the technical services required.

The former of these two responsibilities is less clearly understood than the latter. The social worker knows what his ultimate objective is: To release the innate powers of individuals and groups to the end that joint thinking and action may be broadened in scope and made more effective in quality. But the specific means by which this objective is approached are not easy to define. No single formula provides the answer. As in education, in case work, and in group work, the modifications and the growth of individuals and groups occur in areas difficult to explore, many of them in the subliminal fields of consciousness. Experience has abundantly demonstrated the unpredictability both of individual and of group behavior. Identical stimuli evoke different responses not only from different groups but also from the same group under altered circumstances. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between stimuli and the ensuing responses. This means that the experiences to which a group is exposed do make great differences in their behavior. It is important to grasp the implications of this fact. It means that the social worker endeavors to be selective about the experiences to which he tries to expose the groups with whom he has a professional relationship. He cannot predict with certainty that a given experience will produce the expected responses. But as his understanding of a particular group deepens, he learns

to identify the kinds of experiences that help them to articulate their thinking and to focus their course of action.

It has been said of research in problems of administration that the most fruitful outcome is attained by use of the trial-and-error method, guided by careful evaluations of the results achieved. The same may be said of the professional component of the community organization process, especially in its early stages. With respect to groups with whom the social worker has achieved an understanding relationship, it is possible to select with increasing certainty the kinds of experiences that are likely to meet their needs. But, because of the conspicuous variations in groups, the initial efforts must necessarily be tentative. It may be that certain types of groups have enough attributes in common to justify the hope that what has succeeded with one will succeed with another. In some instances this proves to be true. But, just as the strength of case work has sprung from its emphasis upon the distinctiveness and the dignity of the individual human being, so in community organization there should be constant awareness that groups likewise are both distinctive and self-conscious. The relationships with each group must therefore be regarded as a new area to be explored and developed on the basis of its own peculiar strengths and needs.

The second component of the community organization process consists of the specialized techniques by means of which the social worker helps groups to achieve unity of purpose and action. Prominent among these are fact-finding and research, publicity and public relations, and administration. All these specialized functions are ordinarily carried on within the framework of agencies. An agency may be primarily concerned with case work or with group work, or it may be engaged chiefly in community organization. Regardless of the particular emphasis of its program, the agency's effectiveness in community organization will be determined by the way in which it relates its specialized operating services (administration, research, publicity, etc.) to the community organization process.

Social workers, by reason of their professional education and experience, are equipped to provide some or all of these specialized services that may be used to stimulate the community organization process. The extent to which they succeed is in large measure determined by the degree of purposiveness that inspires their efforts. A good executive, for example, prepares carefully in advance for each meeting of his board of directors. This task is clearly one of his administrative responsibilities. But the executive also realizes that the meeting provides an important opportunity to help the board to enhance its own effectiveness as a group. The board is already to some extent concerned about social welfare problems. It is this interest

that unites the members in the support of the agency's program. In preparing for the board meeting, the executive will seek to develop material that will help the group to understand more fully the agency's program and the social problems with which the program deals. He will also seek to include discussion material that will help the group to decide what steps to take next in enlisting the interest and co-operation of other groups whose support is needed and desired. In short, his effort will not be limited to the routine materials that would be sufficient to enable the board to discharge its minimum obligation as a governing body. He has access to data with which most of the board members are certain to be unfamiliar. His objective is to give to the board meeting a maximum educational content.

As a matter of fact, each board meeting not only is an essential procedure in administration but is also directly or indirectly related to community organization. In presenting a financial report the executive might seem to be functioning solely in his administrative capacity. But his report inevitably evokes reactions. Either he is master of the material or he is not. He presents the figures clearly or he muddles through them. He inspires confidence or he raises questions as to his accuracy and acumen. These reactions contribute to the strengthening or the weakening of his relationships with the board. And the character of these relationships is a determining factor in the executive's capacity to suggest, to stimulate, and to convince in situations where the group feels a need for professional assistance.

It would be possible to review many of the executive functions in similar fashion and to interpret them as means by which the community organization process is cultivated. It is desirable, in fact, for the executive to have both aspects of his job constantly in mind. A speech or a piece of publicity that is designed to help the agency raise its budget can often be framed in such a way as to elicit responses of more far-reaching importance. A meeting of the staff may result in inspiring employees to record the kinds of data that reveal unmet social needs in the community. An official contact with another agency may pave the way for closer co-ordination of the work of two groups with similar objectives. In other words, the immediate administrative responsibility can often be discharged with larger objectives in view. These larger objectives then become determinants in selecting the method of approach in each specific situation.

#### THE SOCIAL WORKER AS A PARTICIPANT

The individual social worker may think of himself as a child welfare worker, a family case worker, a group worker, or a probation officer. In addition, however, he, no less than the executive, has a direct relationship to

the process of community organization. In some instances this relationship may be expressed through the agency in which he is employed. The firsthand experiences of the worker may be utilized by the agency in its attempt to interpret social problems and social programs. Through staff meetings the worker may obtain an opportunity to participate in formulating principles or programs which the agency will later promote in the community. Inevitably the worker will, consciously or unconsciously, interpret the program to his clients. Clients, like all other members of the community, need to understand as fully as possible the nature and scope of the community's social problems and the measures the community has thus far developed to deal with them; for a broad basis of understanding and conviction with respect to these matters provides at least one area in which groups with widely divergent interests can co-operate. In other words, the social worker's own agency provides, potentially at least, several different kinds of opportunities for contributing, both directly and indirectly, to the community organization process.

The individual social worker may also participate in community organization through channels other than those provided by the agency that employs him. Numerous organizations exist that place major emphasis upon the study of social needs and the promoting of social programs to meet those needs. Some of these organizations, notably the American Association of Social Workers, admit to membership only those persons who have had a professional education in the field of social work. Other organizations, such as the various state conferences of social work, include both social workers and interested lay citizens. The trade-unions in the social work field, which at present are found mainly in large cities, have a basic interest, of course, in improving conditions of employment. In addition, however, they devote considerable attention to problems of community organization. Through his active participation in organizations of these various types, the individual social worker has an opportunity to pool his knowledge and experience with that of others and to help in the formulation and promotion of specific programs of social development.

#### THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

Although social workers are constantly seeking increased integration within their own professional organizations, their primary objective in community organization is, of course, to help other groups to respond to the significant challenges in community life. These challenges vary widely in scope. Some problems are local in character and can be adjusted by bringing about appropriate local action. Other problems can be solved

only by the state legislature, by the executive branch of state government, or by some other state-wide agency. In other instances no satisfactory solution can be achieved on any basis less wide than that provided by the resources and talents of the entire nation. And, in the contemporary period, the scourge of mechanized warfare has focused the hopes of mankind upon community organization at a global level.

Thus, in the field of social work, there is no single definition of the term "community" that will serve all occasions. A great variety of definitions may be found in print. Many of these definitions depend upon some kind of geographical limitation. All the people within some particular area make up the community. The area may be rather exactly delimited—a township, a ward, a county—or it may be defined in general terms, such as "the smallest geographical unit of organized association of the chief human activities."<sup>3</sup> The so-called "natural" communities are presumably areas in which people shop, go to church, send their children to school, and carry on a majority of their other activities. Actually, of course, such criteria can be applied only in a rather general way and often—especially in large cities—do not apply to all the people residing in any area.

Other definitions of community are based upon dominant life-interests. According to such definitions, a community consists of persons bound together by some deep common concern. These persons may or may not live in proximity to one another in the same geographical area. Thus, members of a trade-union, a religious sect, or a political club would, from this point of view, constitute a community even though they lived in widely scattered neighborhoods throughout the city.

Since a considerable volume of social work is sponsored by sectarian groups, the religious interest is very frequently used to define community. Reference is often made to the Jewish or the Catholic "community," which supports and directs various kinds of social agencies. Protestant social work is less sharply defined, though in most cities there are some programs under Protestant auspices—Lutheran, Episcopalian, etc. Usually, however, there is not an inclusive Protestant community with organic unity comparable to that of the Jewish or the Catholic group.

Although these various definitions of community have their uses, the social worker cannot accept any one of them exclusively. His concept of community must necessarily vary in terms of the particular problem under consideration. The practical question facing the social worker is this: With respect to this particular problem, what is the area within which

<sup>3</sup> Dwight Sanderson, *Democracy and Community Organization* ("Publications of the American Sociological Society," Vol. XIV), pp. 83-93.



support must be mustered if substantial results are to be achieved? In one instance the answer may be the neighborhood or the ward—as, for example, in attempting to improve methods of collecting and disposing of garbage. In another instance the answer may be the county, or perhaps the state, as in the case of trying to obtain an enlarged local levy or an increased state appropriation for relief. Or a nation-wide effort may be required, as, for example, in seeking to expand the coverage of unemployment compensation or to develop an integrated plan for the care of needy transients.

In general, the traditional political units will be the areas within which the community organization process will be attempted. This is true with respect to privately financed ventures, as well as with respect to public social services. The great majority of community chests and councils of social agencies, for example, are organized either on a city-wide or on a county-wide basis. The public social services are invariably administered by the state or by some political subdivision to which the state has delegated authority. The political subdivision to which these powers are granted may be a township, a town, a county, a city, or, occasionally, a specially constituted authority, such as a welfare district. These political units may or may not possess a certain natural unity and coherence. Regardless of which condition prevails, improvements will be effected only when a substantial number of persons and groups within the political unit favor a proposed development. Therefore, for most purposes, the community organization worker is obliged to think realistically of “community” in terms of the boundaries of one or another of the traditional political units.

Some social workers believe that the community organization process should originate in neighborhood groups. In a number of cities neighborhood councils have been developed to provide a channel through which the process may operate. In some instances social workers have stimulated the development of such councils. In other cases the organizations have sprung up spontaneously under the leadership of local clubs or local individuals. Unquestionably, neighborhood councils have great potentialities as mediums through which an understanding of social problems and social programs may be disseminated. On the basis of present evidence, however, it is not possible to say whether they are equally promising instruments for broad-gauge social-planning purposes.

Obviously, there is a wide difference between the neighborhood organization that adopts and promotes plans formulated by city-wide groups and the neighborhood organization that seeks to initiate the study upon which plans are based that may affect areas much wider than the neigh-

borhood itself. Resources for social planning, both human and financial, are not easy to mobilize at the neighborhood level, and, unless there is a means of co-ordinating the efforts of various neighborhood planning groups, they may find themselves advocating objectives that are mutually irreconcilable.

However, it should be possible to harmonize community organization in the neighborhood and community organization at the level of the larger political unit. The total process requires both educational effort and the co-ordination of thought and activity. If educational experience is most effective among neighborhood groups, the activities inspired by the experience may be most fruitful if co-ordinated by a group with a community-wide approach. For it is clear that many of the improvements planned by neighborhood groups can be translated into accomplishments only by stimulating action on the part of governmental authorities that have jurisdiction over many neighborhoods.

#### SIMILARITIES AMONG THE THREE PROCESSES

Many of the methods used in community organization are also widely used in case work and group work. Case work seeks the facts in order to help the individual or the family to find a way out of trouble. Community organization assembles data in order to help people to ascertain what a particular community needs and how its needs may be met. Fact-gathering, individualization, and diagnosis are common to both processes. Group work provides training and experience in co-operative activity. It seeks to evoke responses that will help a group to achieve substantial agreement and to carry forward unitedly the common purposes of the group. Community organization likewise seeks to stimulate group action and to promote unity of purpose and the will to co-operate in the attainment of objectives. In a sense, group work is a training ground for community organization; for, in community organization, the group seeks to transmit to other groups the experiences that have been effective in integrating its own approach to common responsibilities.

#### OPPORTUNISM

Opportunism enters inevitably into the community organization process. There are times when it is propitious to move forward toward a given objective and other times when aggressive promotion would be injurious to the cause. In recent years it has been possible to secure marked improvements in the provisions for the care of the aged. Legislators, editors, and the public at large have been made "old age conscious" through the

pressures exercised by the Townsend Clubs and others. Hence, it has been a favorable time for interested groups to advocate new provisions and special services for aged persons. In 1935, when the Social Security Act was pending in Congress, it was difficult to interest congressmen in a discussion of unemployment compensation. Their desks were piled high with communications from their constituents relative to old age security, and their concern was to understand and to promote the old age provisions of the bill.

On the other hand, the times have not been favorable for the promotion of measures designed to improve personnel administration in social work. Admittedly, tax money should be used to employ the most competent help that can be obtained at the salary offered. Actually in many states, restrictive residence provisions have made it necessary to engage for social work positions only those with residence in the state. When the General Assembly in Illinois was asked to remove the residence requirement for employment in the public social services, it responded by raising the residence requirement from one year to three. As these illustrations suggest, it is a part of the strategy of community organization to recognize when conditions are favorable to enlist co-operation for an advance on a particular front.

#### QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

There has been a tendency to think that a good personality is the chief qualification needed to exercise successful leadership in community organization. Personality is an asset, of course, in any activity—and particularly in those that involve the promotion of programs. But it is also clear that the social worker engaged in community organization needs, in addition, certain other qualifications, among which are the following:

1. A knowledge of the kinds of facts that will be useful in determining what a community needs
2. A knowledge of the kinds of facts that will be helpful in deciding what methods of promotion to use in any given situation
3. A grasp of research methods
4. An understanding of methods of interpretation
5. Familiarity with the standards that have been developed in each of the fields of social work
6. An understanding of individual and group behavior
7. Skill in stimulating group thinking and in motivating group action.

The foregoing list is not exhaustive. Experience in administration, skill in case work or group work—these would be useful attributes in most situations. Chiefly, it is important to stress, however, that personality and

skill in salesmanship are not enough. Unless the community organizer knows standards, knows how to obtain, evaluate, and interpret facts, he can scarcely hope to provide sound guidance to the groups relying upon him for help.

#### CHANGES IN EMPHASIS

Community organization has been staked out as a process worthy of special study for only a comparatively short period of time. Even during this brief period, however, it has been possible to note certain changes and shifts in interest. In the earlier period the chief emphasis was placed on problems of co-ordination. Many agencies were operating in the same functional field. It was necessary to divide the field among them, to work out intake policies, to arrange for clearance and exchange of information. Some of the co-ordinating devices developed in that period have persisted and are still rendering an essential service—notably the social service exchange.

Somewhat later, major emphasis came to be placed upon the cultivation of community support. In order to attain this objective, it was necessary to undertake jointly a number of functions which had previously been the responsibility of individual agencies. Joint financing provides the most conspicuous illustration of this trend. The effort to obtain wider support in the community also led to increased attention to fact-gathering, research, and interpretation. Social work had long been supported and directed by a relatively small group in the community. It became increasingly clear that this narrow base of support could be widened only by continuous dissemination of verifiable facts concerning social needs. It was also recognized that effectiveness along these lines would necessitate a co-operative approach. Councils and similar mutual associations tended, as a result, to take over from the individual agencies the responsibility for directing research and for interpreting the findings to the community.

In recent years emphasis has been placed to a greater extent than ever before upon the formulating of programs to provide for unmet needs. Private agencies, both individually and through local councils or national headquarters, have proposed specific social programs to legislators. Social workers employed in the public social services have also found ways to inspire groups to address state legislatures and Congress and to sponsor specific bills relating to the social services. Research programs have reflected this interest. Many studies have been undertaken to reveal the scope and character of some particular need and to determine how the need may best be met. The question of interrelationships of agencies is not at present the dominant interest. Today the social agencies and the social workers are

primarily concerned to arouse interest in the questions "What does the community need and how can we get what it needs?"

#### PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

No one is in a position to assert that he can formulate a philosophy of community organization that would be acceptable to all social workers. Yet certain premises and certain motivating drives are obviously held in common by a great majority of those who devote their efforts to community work. The very term "community organization" implies repudiation of the laissez faire point of view. The related view that the race advances through survival of the fit and that it is destructive to protect the weak from extinction is also quite generally denied. Determinism in all of its forms obviously receives scant support. If it be true that "what is to happen will happen," there would be little reason to interpose human effort.

The theory of progressive social evolution, so joyously seized upon in an earlier day, has lost support. Social evolution has come to be looked upon as a synonym for social change. And social change, apparently, can be change either for the better or for the worse. This point of view lends dignity and value to human effort; for it would seem to be consistent with probability that change is most likely to occur in the direction in which it is deliberately directed.

The evidence of history appears to give some support to this view. The span of recorded history is admittedly brief, but even within that period, concerted efforts seem to have produced results. The abolition of human slavery is often cited as an illustration. The drive to abolish illiteracy is another. It seems unlikely that either slavery or illiteracy would have declined so rapidly under a laissez faire policy of leaving all to the natural processes of evolution. The advance seems attributable rather to the deliberate focusing of effort.

Historical data also suggest that the rallying of social forces for a new advance is usually a slow and costly procedure. Developments that have occurred in comparatively recent times afford abundant evidence on this point. From the contemporary point of view, the objectives sought by Dorothea Dix with respect to the care of the insane seem eminently reasonable. Yet her efforts to remove the mentally ill from jails and almshouses and to provide treatment for them in well-ordered hospitals met with stubborn resistance. She was obliged to travel the slow road, gathering the facts, explaining the needs, and gradually winning support for her proposals. Even then, one of her most cherished objectives—federal participation in the program for the insane—was not attained in her lifetime and

remains unattained today, in spite of its patent desirability. Horace Mann, in seeking to promote universal free public education, and Grace Abbott, in striving to abolish child labor, encountered comparable experiences. Inertia, no less than social change, is a basic characteristic of human society. In other words, the amount of time and effort required to attain an objective appears to be excessive when the development can be viewed in retrospect. Gradualism is the watchword of social advance in communities that function within the framework of democracy.

According to the so-called "aggregative" theory, society is merely a collective noun—a term applied to a plural number of individuals. Locke held, for example, that the outstanding characteristic of society is the "war of each against all." In general, social workers reject this interpretation in favor of an organic theory of society. They believe that morbid conditions in any segment of the community react destructively upon the total community. They believe also that, since co-operation exists in many areas of human interest, it can be extended to others. The social process has been said to consist of four stages: competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. This analysis is useful in identifying the present stage of development of any particular social program. In general, social workers believe that deliberate efforts to enlist understanding and support enhance the likelihood of moving toward the higher stages of the social process in which differences relate, not to objectives, but rather to methods of attaining commonly desired goals.

In certain areas, notably in the insect world, there is spontaneous organization of activity. Some members of the group even bear identifiable stigmata or have bodily structures appropriate to the function they are to perform within the group. Nothing comparable exists in human society. If a group in human society decides upon a specific action, such as the protection of the common water supply, numerous pieces of social machinery must be created, such as wage agreements, contracts, judicial offices, biological services, and so forth, in order to insure attainment of the common purpose. It is quite clear, in fact, that the creation of any new community service in human society is a product of theory, research, and trial-and-error experimentation. No one is initially responsible. The need may be identified, in the first instance, by a gifted leader. But from there on, the process may follow any one of numerous lines of development. It appears to be true, however, that one trait is common to most human beings: when they feel strongly that some particular factor in the environment is undesirable, they will unite in an effort to do something about it. The task of community organization is to make capital out of this drive—to try to

promote wider and more rapid recognition of detrimental elements in the environment and to guide the desire for reform by transforming the emotional responses into disciplined, progressive activity.

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## DOCUMENT 1-A

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION: A PRELIMINARY INQUIRY INTO ITS NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS

#### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

When the chairman of Section III of the Conference sent out a call in October, 1938, to the fifteen elected members of the Section, to meet for preliminary work on the 1939 Conference program, a reply was received from one of the members which read in part as follows:

In reviewing the program suggestions, I am convinced that there is a real need for evaluating the processes and objectives of community organization, much as the case workers have done before us and the group workers are now doing. Would we dare, as a Committee, to undertake a study of the concept and its implications to the Conference? It might be possible to form discussion groups in different parts of the country to work on the project simultaneously between now and the 1939 Conference.

This suggestion met with a favorable response and the Section chairman was authorized to name a steering committee to put it into effect. The committee instigated the formation of discussion groups in Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, New York City, and Pittsburgh. These groups held frequent meetings throughout the winter and spring of 1938-1939, coming together finally for a clearance of their findings in an all-day session on the opening day of the Conference (Sunday, June 18, 1939) at Buffalo. At the conclusion of that session, a drafting committee of three—Robert P. Lane, Mary Clarke Burnett, and Arthur Dunham—took the six memoranda, together with the minutes of the discussion on them, and prepared the following report, which was presented to the Conference at the concluding session of Section III on June 24, 1939.

#### REPORT OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE ON PROJECT FOR DISCUSSION OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION<sup>1</sup>

##### I. INITIAL AGREEMENTS

When representatives of the six discussion groups met in Buffalo on June 18, they found themselves in agreement on the following points:

1. That the term "community organization" is used to refer to a *process*, and, as is often the case in other professions, to refer also to a *field*. This

Reprinted from *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1939*, pp. 495-511.



double usage is a familiar phenomenon. Thus we refer to the practice of medicine as a process, and to the field of medicine; to the teaching process and to the field of teaching; to the practice of law, which is a process, and to the legal field; etc.

2. That the process of organizing a community, or some parts of it, goes on outside, as well as inside, the general area of social work. Whatever more careful analysis may disclose this process to consist of, there seems little doubt that it is practiced, for different purposes, by such bodies as chambers of commerce, churches and federations of churches, and political parties—to name only three groups outside of social work to which it may be ascribed. It is the social welfare nature of its objectives when carried on within the area of social work, as well as its general content and setting, that distinguish the community organization work with which we are concerned, from that, for example, at which Mr. James A. Farley is so expert.

3. That within the area of social work the process of community organization is carried on by some organizations as a primary function—that is, by organizations established for the express purpose of carrying it on; and by other organizations as a secondary function—that is, by organizations established for the express purpose of carrying on some other process of social work, which find, however, that *their* primary function is advanced if they engage also in community organization. Obvious examples are a council of social agencies, whose primary function is that of community organization; and a family agency, whose staff and especially whose executive often engage in community organization in order to promote the more effective performance of their primary function of case work, or even to promote the advancement of the total social welfare program in the community.

4. That within the area of social work the process of community organization is carried on not only in communities or neighborhoods, or on the local level, but also on a state-wide basis and on a nation-wide basis, or on the state and national levels. Examples on the state level are a State Department of Welfare setting and enforcing standards for the operation of child-caring institutions; and on the national level, the United States Children's Bureau with its field service and its infinitely helpful publications with which we are all familiar.

The process is also carried on between such levels—that is, between the Federal and state governments, or between state and local governments; or between national or state voluntary organizations and local voluntary organizations. Examples of this inter-level process are the work-

ing agreements between the United States Employment Service and state employment services; and the provisions under which state departments of welfare reimburse local departments for relief expenditures and set personnel and other standards to which local units of government must conform.

5. That organizations whose primary function is the practice of community organization do not, as a rule, offer help directly to clients. Their work lies rather with functional agencies and interested groups of non-clients; but the aim and justification of the community organization process is improvement in the coverage and quality of service to clients which the community is enabled to provide.

## II. WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION?

There has been no agreement as yet by the six study groups on a formal definition of community organization. Three of the groups submitted tentative definitions, which are given below; some of the other groups included definitions suggested by individual members.

One group proposed the following definition:

[Community Organization] is the process of dealing with individuals or groups who are or may become concerned with social welfare services or objectives, for the purpose of influencing the volume of such services, improving their quality or distribution, or furthering the attainment of such objectives.

Another group suggested this:

In the social welfare field, Community Organization may be described as the art and process of discovering social welfare needs and of creating, coordinating and systematizing instrumentalities through which group resources and talents may be directed toward the realization of group ideals and the development of the potentialities of group members. Research, interpretation, conference, education, group organization and social action are the principal tools used in the process.

A third group offered the following:

[Community Organization] is a type of social work concerned with efforts to direct social resources effectively toward the specific or total welfare needs of any geographical area. Its performance may involve such activities as fact-finding, coordination, improving standards, interpretation, developing welfare programs, changing patterns of social work, and promoting social legislation.

Despite differences in wording, there is an encouraging measure of agreement in these three definitions. The emphasis varies: one stresses the discovery of social welfare needs, and strikes the note of prevention as well as of treatment; one lays stress on the establishment and development of relationships between individuals and groups actually or potentially concerned with "social welfare services or objectives"; one centers

around the idea of "directing" social resources to meet welfare needs. But the core idea of each definition is that of mobilizing resources to meet needs; each one expresses or implies the ideas of initiating social services, coordinating the efforts of welfare agencies, and building welfare programs.

Clearly, if our limited experience is any indication, the nature of the community organization process, though meagerly treated in professional literature, still enjoys a generous measure of common understanding, and should prove to be susceptible of analysis and statement.

### III. CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

#### PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

All except one of the group reports devoted some space to consideration of the objectives, methods, or characteristic activities of community organization. These "characteristics" of community organization were further discussed by the joint group at the meeting on June 18. A considerable measure of agreement was apparent, but need was recognized for further study and clarification of all these points. For example, are "fact-finding" and "interpretation" to be regarded as objectives or as methods? It is not a mere matter of terminology that is involved here; it is the whole question of the organization of our thinking about this area of social work.

Regarding the characteristics of community organization, the Drafting Committee advances the following suggestions quite tentatively and as a basis for further exploration and discussion. In their present form they have been evolved during the progress of a National Conference week, with all its attendant pressures; obviously, therefore, they require analysis and testing against experience, more carefully and with much more leisure, by groups and social workers representing various sections of the country and various fields of practice.

One clue to the nature of community organization seemed to be suggested in a hypothesis put forward by one member of our group. This hypothesis, which gained a considerable measure of assent, is here stated in a slightly modified form in which we think most members of the group could accept it: namely, that community organization is usually, and perhaps always, concerned with inter-group relationships. It is clear that neighborhood or local community councils, councils of social agencies, community chests, state conferences of social work and national welfare agencies (to take only a few examples) are constantly concerned with inter-group relationships. We may leave to later testing, in terms of intensive study and experience, the question as to whether or not community organization deals *exclusively* with inter-group relationships.

The Drafting Committee believes that this discussion may be clarified if we think about community organization in terms of (1) its general aim; (2) its secondary objectives; (3) its activities; and (4) its methods and techniques.

#### GENERAL AIM

The general aim of community organization is its basic purpose as a process of social work—its reason for being. We suggest that the general aim of community organization is to bring about and maintain a progressively more effective adjustment between social welfare resources and social welfare needs. This implies that community organization is concerned with (a) the discovery and definition of needs; (b) the elimination and prevention of social needs and disabilities, so far as possible; and (c) the articulation of resources and needs, and the constant readjustment of resources in order better to meet changing needs.

#### SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

If this is the central and primary aim of community organization, there are also several secondary objectives. These secondary objectives are purposes which community organization seeks to accomplish as a means to the realization of its general aim. We suggest the following six secondary objectives:

1. To secure and maintain an adequate factual basis for sound planning and action.
2. To initiate, develop, and modify welfare programs and services, in the interest of attaining a better adjustment between resources and needs.
3. To improve standards of social work and to increase the effectiveness of individual agencies.
4. To improve and facilitate inter-relationships, and to promote coordination, between organizations, groups and individuals concerned with social welfare programs and services.
5. To develop a better public understanding of welfare problems and needs, and social work objectives, programs, and methods.
6. To develop public support of, and public participation in, social welfare activities. Financial support includes income from tax funds, voluntary contributions and other sources.

We should like to note, parenthetically, that five of these six objectives are substantially the same as the five objectives for a council of social agencies set forth by W. Frank Persons in 1925, in his pamphlet, "The Welfare Council of New York City." Mr. Persons' analysis has stood the test of time to a remarkable extent and appears to have a high degree of

validity as applied to this current analysis of the broad process of community Organization.

#### METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Community organization objectives are attained (or pursued) through specific activities carried on by agencies which engage in community organization. In using the term "activity," we differentiate it from "method," conceiving of an activity as a specific project or service which results when a method is applied in a particular time, place, and situation. An activity is something that is done; a method is the way in which it is done.

We suggest that among the methods of community organization are those listed below. This list is merely illustrative; it is not intended as a complete catalogue of the methods in this field, nor have we been at pains to make the several methods listed mutually exclusive. Where convenient, we have suggested how a general method is transformed into an activity in a concrete situation.

1. Continuous central recording is a method used in the community organization process. Using this method, a given council of social agencies may carry on, as an activity, the collection and publication of financial and service data pertaining to the work of its member agencies.

2. Planning, particularly planning by or in behalf of two or more agencies, is a second method used in community organization. Planning an anti-syphilis campaign by a group of agencies is an activity of those agencies which illustrates the use of the planning method.

3. A third method used is that of making special studies and surveys. The carrying out of a study of recreational needs and resources, in a given city, by a national agency, is an illustrative activity.

4. Joint budgeting—that is, planning applied to finances—is a fourth method used. When a chest and council set up and operate a budgeting program they are carrying on a joint activity by using this method.

5. Methods concerned with education, interpretation, and public relations—including use of newspaper publicity, annual reports, other printed literature, public speaking, radio, exhibits, etc.—are used in the community organization process. When the Welfare Federation of Cleveland publishes an educational book regarding social work for school children, this is an activity arising from the application of one of these methods.

6. Planning and execution of joint financial campaigns as a method of community organization is a common phenomenon.

7. The method of organization is used by a council of social agencies when it creates a child welfare division; or by a state conference of social work when it sets up a committee on welfare legislation; or by a national

agency when it establishes a field service; or jointly by a state and county welfare department when the state department's field representative assists the county welfare board in recruiting and training its staff.

8. Inter-agency consultation, through field service or otherwise, is a common method. This occasionally takes on an authoritarian note, as when one of the activities of a state welfare department is the licensing of a private child-caring agency.

9. Development and use of group discussion, the conference process and committees, is a method with which we are all too painfully acquainted to require illustration.

10. Promotion of voluntary agreements through negotiation. Two children's institutions may, but all too frequently do not, avail themselves of this method to carry out the activity of a merger.

11. Operation of joint services. This is a common method, resulting in such a definite activity as operation of a social service exchange.

12. Promotion of legislation, often referred to by the term "social action." So many concrete activities flow from use of this method that illustration is uncalled for except perhaps to say that they include educational and legislative campaigns, promotion of "pressure group" activities, and the advancing of a cause through personal contacts with officials, political leaders, and other persons and groups.

It may be observed that while "social action" is usually thought of in reference to legislation, it need not be confined to that area. For example, "social action" methods may be directed toward a public administrative official, or toward persons not holding public office but able to influence important social policies.

Two comments should be made in regard to this illustrative list of methods of community organization. In the first place, there is an obvious difficulty in deciding how large or how small an area to regard as a single method. For example, shall we speak of social work surveys as a method; or shall we regard as separate methods planning and organizing the survey, carrying on the field work and gathering the data, interpreting the data and writing the report, and so on? Likewise, is "planning and executing a joint financial campaign" a single method; or is it a collection of methods, including planning the campaign, determining quotas, organizing the soliciting force, soliciting the prospects, planning and managing campaign luncheons, and so on?

This problem is raised for further study; we have no answer to it at present. It is obvious that most of the general methods listed above are made up of more specific methods. The careful study and analysis of this "hier-

archy of methods" is urgently needed; but the search must be pursued with some sense of the potential absurdity of relentlessly tracking down methods by successively narrowing the circle until the characteristics of a professional method are lost in a haze of trivialities of individual behavior patterns.

In connection with this further examination of methods, it should be possible to give a somewhat precise meaning to the term "technique" as applied to community organization, and to define the relation of "technique" to "method."

Our second comment is an expression of our recognition that certain common methods are employed in community organization and in the "internal" administration of social agencies: for example, planning, organization, group discussion. How extensive or how important this common area of methods is, cannot be determined until there are available systematic and fairly comprehensive descriptions of the methods used in both these fields.

The Committee would make clear, however, that while it recognizes the existence of common methods in community organization and administration, it does not regard these two fields as identical. Community organization is a process and a field of social work which we are inclined to regard as comparable with case work and group work; administration is a function of all social agencies, whether they are concerned primarily with case work, group work, or community organization. Administration is, of course, a function of other types of organizations: government departments, armies, churches, schools, business concerns, etc. It may be correct to say that the job of a particular social agency executive includes activities of both community organization and administration; but this does *not* mean that the fields of community organization and administration are the same, or that either of these fields is a part of the other. They are separate areas but certain methods are common to both.

The foregoing analysis of some of the characteristics of community organization is tentative and partial; but we believe it will serve to summarize our present thinking and to provide a starting point for the next stage in exploring the process of community organization.

#### IV. THE FIELD OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

A field of work may be conceived either as composed of the organizations whose major activity is such work, or as composed of all persons whose major employment or interest is in the processes of the work. This alternative approach corresponds to the major classifications by occupa-

tion and industry used by the United States Employment Service and the Bureau of the Census. The industrial classification includes all persons employed in a business firm, the latter being listed under an "industry" in accordance with its major activity, and all its employees being then reported for that industry regardless of the kind of work they do. The occupational classification describes persons in terms of the kind of work they do, regardless of the industry in which they may be employed. Thus in the lumber industry a great variety of occupations will be found; and, on the other hand, the occupation of bookkeeper is practiced in hundreds of industries.

Adoption of the industrial method of classification as a basis for discussing the fields within social work presents certain difficulties. In this view, a field would comprise the total professional personnel of all social work agencies having a major concern with the processes of that particular field. Community organization would thus *include* case workers, research workers, publicity specialists, etc.—persons not actually carrying on the community organization process—whenever such persons are employed by an agency whose major concern is with that process. It would *exclude* persons actually doing community organization when such persons are employed by agencies having a major concern with other fields—group work, case work, public health, etc.

In our opinion the occupational basis of classification should be used in delimiting the field of community organization—that is, the field should be defined independently of the agency auspices under which the work is done. The definition should seek to identify the community organization process wherever it is practiced.

The complexity of social agency structure, and the necessity of relating the total agency equipment which the community possesses to the total need which exists within the community, and to the total support available, has given rise to a specialized type of agency having its primary function in the field of community organization. Councils of social agencies, as already noted, and community chests are the characteristic organizations of this type operating on a city-wide or county-wide basis. On the national level, voluntary national agencies are familiar to all of us, and are squarely within the field of community organization. Many state-wide voluntary agencies are also in the field—the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, for example, or the State Charities Aid Association of New York, or state-wide citizens' committees of a permanent or temporary nature. Both the Federal government and state governments establish frequent government commissions, for purposes of fact-finding or



planning, which must be viewed as carrying on a community organization process. And since State and Federal programs are ultimately carried out in local communities, the process of relating the higher to the lower level of operation can properly be considered as also a community organization process.

The city-wide or county-wide area is often broken down into sub-units. These sub-units occasionally coincide with political sub-divisions of the city or county; or they may be more or less natural "neighborhoods"; or they may be delimited somewhat arbitrarily for administrative convenience. An agency whose program is directed toward bringing about a better adjustment of resources to needs in such an area, such as a community council and perhaps some settlements, should be considered as having its primary function in the field of community organization.

In agencies like those discussed above, which have the community organization process as their primary function, it follows naturally that most of their staff members are practitioners of community organization. Such agencies may, of course, employ professional people whose immediate duty is the carrying on of another kind of specialty—statisticians, for example, or journalists, or even case workers; and it is a nice question as to when such workers should be viewed as engaged in the process of community organization. An examination of each type of case would doubtless be necessary for final decision. In general, if the work of such persons is carried on in furtherance of the primary function of the agency, they may perhaps be viewed as peripheral practitioners of community organization.

Less peripheral than this last group of workers, but not so close to the center of the community organization field as the first group of staff members we considered, is another group who call for special mention. We cannot afford to forget that all social work is practiced by virtue of popular acceptance of the need for such work. All social workers, therefore, are required to obtain a measure of popular understanding and support as part of their professional practice. In a metropolitan agency, where there may be considerable division of labor among the staff, some persons may engage in a minimum of community organization work; whereas others, and especially the executive, even though the agency's primary function is family case work, may spend much of their time in practicing what is clearly the community organization process. And in a rural area served by an agency with a small staff, one often sees the community organization function united with other social work functions in each staff member. The field of community organization must be defined in such manner as to in-

clude these workers as well as more clear-cut cases. Not, indeed, until we have scrutinized virtually everything done in the name of social work, and have satisfied ourselves as to whether it is or is not directed toward the primary or some secondary objective of community organization, and as to whether it does or does not employ the methods of community organization, can we be sure that we have accurately staked out the field in which the community organization process operates.

#### V. SELECTION OF A NAME FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

It will be noted that so far in this report we have used the expression "community organization" without comment as to whether or not we found it a wholly satisfactory descriptive label for the process and field whose content and limitations we are trying to determine. In the opinion of a number of the groups it is not wholly satisfactory. We are aware that it has gained wide currency and is regarded by many, perhaps by most, social workers as well established and acceptable. We are familiar with the admonition, "Remove not the ancient landmark." In these circumstances it is obviously desirable that the term be continued in general usage unless analysis of the process gradually brings recognition that the term is inadequate and unless a more accurate and equally convenient term gradually gains acceptance. We definitely are not here proposing adoption of a substitute term. We think it worth while, however, to indicate some of the reasons for the dissatisfaction many of our members felt with the expression "community organization," and to mention some of the alternative terms suggested. The reasons for dissatisfaction may be summarized as follows:

The word "community" presented difficulties. To many of us it inevitably suggests only local activities. Further, when coupled with "organization," it seems to suggest that some entire "community" is being "organized." We have indicated our agreement that, first of all, we were seeking to identify a process, and our further agreement that this process is practiced on local, state and Federal levels, and between such levels. Many of us were therefore persuaded that we should seek also for a term that would clearly refer to the process alone, without including a word that introduced a confusing and perhaps misleading geographical limitation. This, it was urged, has been done in connection with the case work process and the group work process.

Some of our members thought the absence of the word "social," or any other word identifying the process with the field of social work, was un-

fortunate, especially as the process is practiced outside the social work field. Here again, we were reminded, the full expressions "social case work" and "social group work" serve as admirable examples.

Substitute terms that were suggested included the following: social planning, social welfare planning, social engineering, social community work, community work, community organization work, community organization for social work, welfare organization work, inter-group work, social organization work, social welfare organization. Most of these terms were examined critically and finally rejected by the very persons who suggested them. It is worth noting that the expression "social welfare planning," which has behind it the authority of articles in the *Social Work Year Book* with an author of the articles and the editor of the *Year Book* serving as chairmen of two of our groups, found no backers for the present purpose. Two of the other terms, however, were considered in some detail and argued for. These two were "social organization work" and "social welfare organization."

In support of "social organization work," it was urged that this term identifies the process with social work through use of the word "social"; that in the same way it makes the term coordinate in form with the accepted terms "social case work" and "social group work"; and, obviously, that it eliminates the confusing word "community."

In support of "social welfare organization," it was urged that it combines the best parts of two old terms, "social welfare planning" and "community organization," and hence its adoption might cause a minimum of strain.

In behalf of either term, it could be argued that the heart of the process we are seeking to baptize, or re-baptize, is *organization*, and these terms use the noun "organization" as their key word. One group felt some difficulty over the word "organization"; but after a discussion that would have done credit to Browning's Grammarian, and after first confessing and then suppressing a faint qualm over the administrative implications of the word, they went on record as believing that with all its faults it should be invoked.

We desire to repeat that selection of a label for the process we are examining did not seem to us a matter of the first importance. For that matter, neither did agreement on a formal definition of the process. Perhaps because so many of us are tainted with scholasticism, we could not forego a measure of hair-splitting and logic-chopping in the course of our discussions; but we never deserted our basic conviction that the essential task

confronting those concerned with community organization is to know what they are *doing* and trying to do. If agreement is reached on this central point, agreement on lesser points—of which the name of the process is an example—should not prove difficult.

#### VI. PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Before concluding we should like to record the fact that two or three of our groups gave some attention to the qualifications that should be looked for in people who engage in community organization, and this inevitably led us into a discussion of the training that might best develop those qualifications. Neither of these topics was pursued at much length in our joint Sunday meeting in Buffalo, so no conclusions in respect of either are presented here. We do not, however, minimize their importance. We are aware that the subject of training for work in community organization is undergoing examination by a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee of the American Association of Schools of Social Work; and it would seem obvious that agreement on the kind of training needed cannot be reached without some measure of agreement on the nature and content of the work for which the training is given. If methods of training, viewed strictly, are a responsibility of teachers of social work, the work trained for is primarily a responsibility of those carrying it on and directing it. It is possible, therefore, that joint exploration of many aspects of our common problems is the indicated procedure.

#### VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The experience of our discussion groups justifies, we believe, two generalizations that are obvious when stated, but that seem to us as important as they are obvious.

*First:* Despite a scanty amount of close, intensive, *joint* examination of the community organization process, despite a meager literature, despite a dearth of teaching materials, despite the absence of published job analyses, despite a relatively uncriticized nomenclature—despite all these lacks, there is considerable agreement on the nature, content and limitations of the process itself. Our understanding of some portion of this agreement has been presented above. A continuation of the sort of work we have tried to do, we are satisfied, will reveal still further areas of agreement.

*Second:* Such a continuation we believe is desirable and important. We favor this not merely that further areas of agreement may be revealed and

become widely known, but rather that professional understanding of the entire process of community organization may be sharpened, deepened and widened. Specifically, we think the following aspects of the process should receive critical examination:

1. What are the objectives of community organization? How should they be formulated? How can they be more widely understood, approved and supported?

2. What activities are carried on as part of this process? In what kind of communities or geographical areas—or in what circumstances—are such activities most successful?

3. By what methods are these activities carried on? How can these methods be made more effective?

4. What principles underlying the theory and practice of community organization can be—or should be—agreed on?

5. What qualifications are now looked for in persons engaged in community organization? What qualifications should be looked for? What training will best develop these qualifications?

6. How can adequate records of the community organization process be prepared and made available? Can workers in the field be induced to experiment in keeping them? Such records, be it noted, should *reveal methods* rather than merely *report results*.

7. How can we evaluate the objectives, the activities, the methods and the principles of community organization? Evaluation, of course, should be made in the light of the best professional practice.

As a means of insuring the further examination of these problems, we unite in recommending that the officers of Section III of the National Conference take steps to set up a suitably representative committee for the ensuing year, charged with the duty of carrying on the work on which we have made a modest, but to us a highly pleasurable, beginning.

*Drafting Committee*

ROBERT P. LANE, New York City, *Chairman*  
MARY CLARKE BURNETT, Pittsburgh  
ARTHUR DUNHAM, Ann Arbor, Michigan

June 1939

DOCUMENT 1-B  
THE BIOLOGY OF SOCIAL LIFE  
SEVENTEENTH MAUDSLEY LECTURE<sup>a</sup>

It is a biological axiom that life started as a single cell, and still continues to do so. The most striking thing about a living cell is its incessant urge to assert itself as strongly as its environment will permit. This is the real struggle for existence. It is an extraordinarily interesting fact that if embryonic kidney-cells, for instance, are grown by themselves in a suitable medium they appear, according to some observers, to become positively malignant. Put some embryonic connective tissue into that medium and the kidney-cells promptly conform to type. They have to learn to adapt themselves to the needs of their neighbor. Cancer is a process of cell anarchy, the malignant cell brutally riding rough-shod over the others. Just so a man sufficiently released from the control of his environment becomes malignant, like many autocrats. As Mr. Baldwin said, "None of us is wise enough or good enough to be a dictator."

Maudsley wrote: "It is not easy for the individual to realize how much he owes to the restraints and supports of the social fabric in which he is an element, and which, like the atmosphere, always and insensibly surrounds him. There could not be a greater danger to the balance of any mind than to be exempt from the bonds and pressure of the surrounding social system." We see that contention of his illustrated in the United States today where, although one is particularly conscious of the pressure of herd opinion, there are outbreaks of gangsterdom, chiefly among imported aliens who have been set free from their own environment but have not assimilated themselves with the new, remaining Ishmaelites within it. It is one of the drawbacks of these vast new suburbs, mere dormitories, which radiate out like huge tentacles from London, destroying the countryside as they grow, that they offer so few opportunities for communal life and a social background.

The whole story of many-celled organisms is one of mutual adjustment between the different tissues, each trying to do its best for itself within the limits of those adjustments. The first stage in evolution was a number of single cells herding together for mutual support but each doing the same

<sup>a</sup> By Sir Walter Langdon-Brown, M.A., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P., in *Journal of Mental Science*, Vol. LXXXIII (January, 1937), No. 342; N.S., No. 306, pp. 1-14.

work. The next stage was one when groups of cells did different work. In evolution there are two parallel processes—increasing division of labour and increasing co-ordination between the different parts. The latter was achieved under the control of the central nervous system. A strong central government is needed to help to keep order, and no high degree of differentiation is possible in the animal body without the control of a centralized nervous system which has gradually acquired an increasing predominance. It is not too fanciful to compare the origin of the nervous system to a group of settlers on the coast, who gradually invade the interior, first singly and then in an organized army, as in the nervous system of vertebrates, which arises as a tube on the surface of the body. Once established, the invader assumes control over the indigenous inhabitants, fortifying itself as it goes, and maintaining its protectorate by a system of rapid communication throughout the invaded areas. The biological and sociological parallel is remarkably complete.

Just as the cells struggle to achieve the best they can within their environment, so the individual they form struggles either to do so, or to change its surroundings. The mud-fish gasping for breath on the mud-flats and struggling to reach the land was, no doubt, actuated by the need to escape from the competition of life in the sea towards the abundant food supply on the land. From that successful struggle all the land vertebrates and ultimately man himself arose. The power motive is therefore inherent in every cell in our body and is inherited from our remotest ancestors.

Now, in the evolution of the invertebrates a terrible dilemma arose—they are so constructed that their nervous systems cannot develop further without choking them. Two methods of escape from the dilemma were found: one, the development of the gregarious habit; the other, the new pattern of nervous system which characterizes the vertebrate. The former method, in which each individual is absorbed into the community and is helpless apart from it, marks an advance which was fraught with great possibilities. For bees and ants this was comparatively easy, because of the very smallness of the brain of the individual and the limited number of reactions of which it is capable. Moreover, the social habit in insects has imposed its demands, not only on the work, but on the structure of the individuals composing the group. It has sterilized large numbers, rendering them neuter and thus enormously simplifying the problem. Conflict and competition are greatly increased in a community where each individual aims at seeing himself immortalized in his offspring. Still more is this the case when one such community comes up against another similar one. The

evolution of the vertebrate gave ample opportunities for the brain to expand. As the higher centres developed, the automatic actions of the lower centres were held in check while more skilled voluntary movements became possible. And as the highest level developed it exercised control over both voluntary and automatic movements, restraining emotional expression, but increasing skill through increased intelligence. Thus man, having laboriously acquired the power of speech, had to learn the still more subtle art of silence.

The first law of the herd is "Thou shalt not." Just as the development of the higher nerve centres checks instinctive activities, so the development of communal life must restrict the freedom of the individual. Man has not found this easy. Philosophers may lament this, theologians may attribute it to original sin, but the biologist will remember that the cells of which he is composed did not find it easy to sink their individuality in that of the organism. A clever woman once said to me of her son, "He hasn't fused his ancestors yet." It was profoundly true.

Yet evolution continues to demand that we shall fuse our ancestors, that we shall enlarge the unit. The family becomes the tribe, the tribe the small nation. The heptarchy becomes the monarchy, the nation an empire. And all the time the individuals within the unit are clamouring for self-expression, the smaller unit within the empire for self-determination. Sir Arthur Keith has called attention to two opposing tendencies in life—one the general demand for enlargement of the unit, the other the species-making impulse which attempts to segregate a particular type. The first in human life makes for internationalism, the second for nationalism.

There are three stages in the evolution of human society; to the first the name of "co-consciousness" has been applied, or, as Aldrich calls it, "a collective unconscious morality inherent in the laws of life," so far as they can be appreciated. At this stage man is bound with a hypnotic completeness to every taboo. If he breaks a taboo he may even die, apparently from the sense of sin and isolation he experiences, as a bee dies when separated from the swarm. River's studies of the Melanesians convinced him that they seemed to recognize instinctively, using that much-abused word in the strict sense, what the general feeling of the group was, and what definite line of action it should take. Such communities are stable precisely because they are not individualized. The avoidance of collisions between foot passengers in crowded pathways, thought reading and social tact, he regarded as vestiges among us today of that social common consciousness.



In the second stage individuals begin to emerge, and it is interesting to the medical profession to observe that it is the witch doctor, the magician, who is the first to do so. As Gerald Heard says, probably the proto-individual realizes that he is different from the herd before it becomes apparent to them. So he adopts a role which is impressive to the onlooker and suggestive to himself.

And so individualism spreads and grows. In this second stage, as Aldrich says, "the group represses egotistic tendencies by forcibly imposing a conventional morality." But as more and more individuals become self-conscious, the state becomes more unstable. It has been said that civilizations do not really decay, but burst from the tension produced by the rapid expansion of individualities within its borders. This is the present and urgent problem of civilization—to give scope for individual development, and yet for the individual to fit into his place as a part of a much larger whole. It is Aldrich's third stage—not yet reached by any society but recognized by an increasing number of persons—a stage in which the members of the group consciously co-operate for the common good, and not merely instinctively as in the social insects.

Yet amid all change the human mind always desires to crystallize what should remain a living force, heedless of biology, which teaches that this is impossible. A living thing must always be changing—to crystallize is to kill the spirit and merely to preserve the letter. The human mind works with symbols, and as time goes on it is apt to take the symbol for the substance, instead of regarding it as an attempt, suited to the mentality of the age, to give expression to ideas, otherwise intangible. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in a comparative study of religions. With the flux of time the old symbolic representations become unacceptable and often frankly repulsive to many individuals in subsequent generations. Yet to many, they represent the faith delivered once and for all, which it is sacrilege to question. Leonard Woolf puts it forcibly when he says, "The strangest and most important fact about communal psychology is that its content is largely the ideas, beliefs and aims of the dead . . . the law of the mortmain or the dead hand. . . . There can be no understanding of history, of politics, or of the effects of communal psychology which does not take into consideration the tremendous effect of this psychological dead hand, the dead mind. . . . At every particular moment it is the dead rather than the living who are making history, for politically, individuals think dead men's thoughts and pursue dead men's ideals . . . mere ghosts of

beliefs, ideals from which time has sapped all substance and meaning. . . . A dogma is simply a belief which the living receive as a command from the dead."

But I would suggest that the real reason why this influence which the dead past continues to exert over the living man is so powerful, is that he carries within himself, still living, the genes of his dead ancestors. For, as Samuel Butler said in *Life and Habit*: "His past selves are living in him at this moment with the accumulated life of centuries. 'Do this, this, this, which we too have done and found profit in it,' cry the souls of his forefathers within him. Faint are the far ones, coming and going as the sound of bells wafted to a high mountain; loud and clear are the near ones, urgent as an alarm of fire."

Thus is our psychological evolution limited and retarded. But unless we can overcome this difficulty sufficiently to adjust to the imperative demands of new conditions, the issue for civilization is scarcely in doubt. "Modify or disappear" is the inexorable sentence of evolution when the organism is confronted by a changing environment. Man feels the peril of change, and has sought to build breakwaters against the tide by means of written constitutions and printed creeds. The war was but the traditional seventh wave which smashed breakwaters that were already in peril. And in the deluge which accompanied and followed it man has lost confidence. Many things which he imagined were founded on rock he discovered were mainly built on sand.

Recently man has become rather overawed by the universe in which he finds himself. He can hardly comprehend the vastness and emptiness of the interstellar spaces, or the minuteness of the electrons within the atom. Life trembles, as it were, in a narrow zone between intolerable heat and intensest cold; if it wavers on either side, it ceases to be. It can only exist in association with an atom which holds twelve electrons within its orbit. Staggered by such facts, he is too apt to forget that the most marvellous of all matter is the nerve-cell, and that, so far as we know, he possesses the most highly developed system of such cells, whereby he can perceive and interpret the phenomena by which he is surrounded. The astronomer in H. G. Wells's story realized that he was greater than the comet which was presently going to destroy the earth and him with it, because he knew what the comet was going to do, and the comet did not.

But man has become much less confident of the control which reason can exert over his instincts. It required the convulsion of a great war abruptly to remind us that if we had subdued Nature externally, internally,

in ourselves, she is as cruel and bloodthirsty as ever. Man has acquired a control over machines without acquiring anything like a corresponding control over himself. He does not even appear to be able to control satisfactorily something he has created for his own convenience—namely currency. He has a fatal aptitude for applying his discoveries to destructive ends. Aviation has been described recently as “the discovery that took the wrong turning,” and that is typical of much.

Evolution always offers a higher and a lower road: to a form which involves an expanding, more complex unit, or to one which degenerates to a lower level, though more consonant with the capacity of its components. The ascidian, reduced to a jelly-like lump clinging to a rock like a piece of sea-weed, still retains vestiges of its vertebrate origin, and its young start off in each generation as hopeful young vertebrates, until the fatal taint of degeneration strikes them. But that is to look at it from our point of view. The ascidian lazily clinging to that rock may be perfectly happy. This is what makes present-day conditions so disturbing. Whole nations which apparently feel unable to maintain the ideals that we regard as the higher ones actually seem to gain a new hope and a new faith by departing from them. The new level is more suited to their evolutionary development, and they are more comfortable in it. Depreciation of ideals, like depreciation of currency, seems to give them a new stability.

In this process no ideal has suffered so severely as that of liberty. Harold Nicolson inquires, “Is national independence so far more important than personal freedom? That is a question,” he went on to say, “which the present generation are unable to answer.” It seems to me that a good many nations have already answered it in the affirmative. The segregating, species-making impulse has, at any rate for the moment, the upper hand. General Smuts recently made a powerful claim for liberty as the foundation of political health and happiness; whereas in three-fourths of Europe liberty is now regarded as a curse, tyranny as the way of salvation. It may be that the old ideas of liberty were too negative; it may well be that the population of large areas of the globe are not yet fit for it. We feel it about India, so we need not be surprised if some European countries feel it about themselves. It is certainly the fact that nineteenth century ideas of liberty were too much bound up with a policy of *laissez faire* which led to social injustice. It is inevitable that the State shall take an increasing part in planning the lives of its individual citizens. In the same way we are learning that in the body the central nervous system exercises some control, even over functions which were thought to be entirely autonomous. I reminded you at the outset that in evolution there are two parallel processes

at work—increasing division of labour and increasing co-ordination. The evolution of large industries illustrates both of these. Indeed, the division of labour in a large factory has reached such a pitch that in many occupations craftsmanship is dead and the workman has become a robot. It is therefore significant and encouraging to find that a captain of industry, Sir Josiah Stamp, should have devoted his presidential address to the British Association to a consideration of the effects of industrial change upon the social organism—a subject of great importance to the welfare of the State. He pointed out that when the time-span of important change was considerably longer than that of the individual human life, we enjoyed the illusion of fixed conditions. Now the time-span is much shorter, but our attitude of mind still tends to regard change as the exceptional, and rest as the normal, rather than the converse. But these alternative attitudes make all the difference to the accommodating mechanisms we provide. In one case there will be well-developed tentacles, grappling iron, anchorages, and all the apparatus of security. In the other, society will put on casters and roller bearings, cushions, and all the aids to painless transition. Thus the written Constitution of the United States, devised for the "horse and buggy" days, acts as a serious drag on adaptations to entirely different conditions. A scientific study of the effects of scientific discovery itself on both capital and labour is urgently needed in order to render the change from obsolescent to new methods as smooth as possible.

I hope I have made clear what seems to me the present dilemma. The first biological stage of a community is held together by taboos and fertility rites; individuality is at a discount. In the second, individualities develop, and the religious trend is towards individual salvation and personal immortality. The increasing tendency towards individualism becomes incompatible with the highly organized state which a complex civilization requires, for, as Maudsley said, the social organism of which the individual is an element only exists by some suppression of his purely self-regarding impulses. The evolutionary demand for an enlargement of the unit excites a defensive reaction towards national segregation. To effect this, freedom of trade, freedom of exchange, freedom of intercourse, and personal freedom have to be rigorously suppressed. But although human beings in a community are the equivalent of the cells in an organism, they have achieved self-consciousness and individuality. If, therefore, the repressing force upon their originating and creative powers is strong enough these powers will die and degeneration will follow. *Laissez faire* would lead to disintegration, and autocracy would lead to mental and moral slavery.

The solution can only be found by a method which gives adequate freedom to the individual life within a larger co-ordinated unit. Can we achieve it? Perhaps we are neither wise enough nor good enough. It is no more reasonable to blame the present epoch for its savage and infantile psychology than it would be to blame the brontosaurus for its tiny brain. Has this civilization to go back to the melting-pot like its predecessors? If so, another will rise in its place. Of that we may be sure, though it is little consolation to us or to our children. In the past, when a civilization has fallen, the rise of the next has been a matter, not of years, but of centuries, until some new dominant blend could arise. We are therefore naturally concerned to see the civilization of today conserved. If I could show the way, I might well claim the position of a beneficent dictator. All I am aiming at is to illustrate the truth of Maudsley's dictum: "The general law of development which governed the process during the unrecorded ages was the same law which is proved to have worked within the short compass of recorded time—namely the law of the more complex and special development at the cost of the more simple and general." In addition I hope I have analysed some of the defects inherent in that process. "The fault, dear Brutus, is in ourselves," rather than in a malignant fate obscurely moving behind the scenes. Can we not hope that by remorselessly stripping off the labels from outworn symbols, by resolutely adopting reality principles, we may, before it is too late, realize the latent possibilities in human life, and recognize that the springs of happiness come from within? In the willing cooperation of free individuals for the common weal lies the only solution. Is this a contradiction in terms? I believe not. We are members all of one body.

DOCUMENT 1-C  
TEACHING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN  
SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK<sup>6</sup>

The subject of community organization has been receiving considerable attention recently from the point of view of both practice and theory. It is from such joint consideration that the teaching of other subject matter in schools of social work has developed. For in reality there can be no logical separation between practice and theory. What is sound practice must of necessity be based on valid scientific analysis of subject matter. Theoretical analysis, in turn, represents insight born of practical experience, observation and verification. Theory and practice appear no more nor less separable than the proverbial hen and the egg.

One of the central problems in the study of community organization has been the definition of community. I shall not undertake an exhaustive discussion of this problem within the limits of this paper, for it would be both exhausting and futile. I shall merely state my tentative conclusions with respect to this point, conclusions which are the result of both practical experience and theoretical analysis. My definition, like that of any other student, should be construed only as a useful tool for purposes of study and analysis, and should *not* be confused with definitive attempts to settle something, once and for all.

Assuming that you are familiar with Eubank's definition of the group, which I have found practical, I shall merely repeat it at this point: "Two or more persons in a relationship of psychic interaction, whose relationship with one another may be abstracted and distinguished from their relationship with all others so that they must be thought of as an entity."<sup>7</sup>

For the purposes of this discussion, I shall define community as two or more groups in a relationship of psychic interaction, whose relationships with one another may be abstracted and distinguished from their relationship with all others (groups) so that they may be thought of as an entity.

From such a viewpoint one can visualize as small or as large a community as the limits of such a definition may impose. Modern science and invention have greatly extended the possibilities of psychic interaction or

<sup>6</sup> A paper presented at the National Conference of Social Work, 1941, by Wilber I. Newstetter, dean of the School of Applied Social Sciences, University of Pittsburgh.

<sup>7</sup> Earle Edward Eubank, *The Concepts of Sociology* (1932), p. 163.

human communication of a reciprocal nature. Social process, or the phenomenon of mutual seeking and mutually becoming is characteristic of all human relationships, and is the medium through which the art of social work is practiced, whatever its particular form of specialization. Social case work, social group work and community organization work of necessity deal both *with* and *through* social process.

The use of the term "process" here implies a different conception of this word than when it is employed to characterize relations between inanimate material subject matter such as iron ore, manganese, sulphuric acid and the like. A process in this area is one which proceeds according to pre-arranged and predictable sequence. The Bessemer process is an example. In the realm of human relations, characterized by *reciprocal* relations, where environment, culture in all its components, is neither constant nor controllable in the same sense, where growth and change are taking place constantly, we have a situation which is dynamic, and in *each* instance, *unique*. In this sense, then, every configuration of interacting groups, and by definition, every community is unique.

But there is always subject matter to inter-group relations. To the extent that this subject matter pertains vitally to social work purposes and objectives, efforts to deal with inter-group or community problems would seem to fall more or less within the purview of the social work profession.

But what is a profession? What is social work? Two brief definitions are advanced here again for purposes of analysis, leading to our discussion of today's topic, teaching community organization in schools of social work—that is—in professional schools.

A profession in the learned sense, and in contra-distinction to any occupation in which a person makes his living, is characterized, I believe, by three things: first, there is a body of generalized knowledge which a practitioner can and must acquire; second, practice, or the application of this knowledge to specific situations, consists of the exercise of two concurrent, inter-dependent and continuous types of *judgment or discretion*: (a) that which is necessary to understanding the nature of each dynamic and *unique* situation encountered; and (b) that which is necessary to the creative art of deliberately affecting these unique situations in the public as well as in the individual interest. Third, public recognition of the first and second things mentioned above, as evidenced by: (a) demand for practice; (b) economic provision for practice; (c) definition of the conditions for practice; and (d) educational provision for preparation of practitioners.

I believe, furthermore, that social work as a profession, or as a part of a wider profession not yet defined, is the art of dealing creatively with cer-

tain problems of human relations and with certain problems in the environment insofar as they focus upon human welfare, individual and collective. At this stage "certain" is loosely defined by social agency function, assuming that "function" in turn is limited by such content and objectives as are *centrally* involved in dealing *with* and *through* social process. There are secondary "contents" as well as "objectives," for example, research, accounting, purchasing, money-raising and the like. Some of these may fall within the province of persons on social agency staffs whose competence is not professional social work competence, such as accounting and purchasing. But at the point where relationships become of equal or of more importance than so-called secondary content, it is obvious that professional social work competence is called for. Such would be the case in my opinion, for example, where groups are involved in any central planning services. The limits of this paper prevent detailed discussion of this point.

I think we might all agree that *relationships* and *social work objectives* are two main criteria in examining "community organization" in relation to professional education for social work. I hope my previous discussion enables us to move on from the arguments about community, but there remains this word "organization" to be considered. Everything has to be organized these days, in and out of social work, in and out of the community, for all sorts of purposes. I share with many others the unhappiness about the term "community organization." Even adding "work" to it does not seem by terminology to place such activity necessarily within professional social work.

For purposes of this paper I am going to use the term "social inter-group work." Any claim to professional pertinence of efforts to deal with and through inter-group relations for social work purposes appears to lie in these very items (relationships and social work objectives) rather than because this ill-defined thing called "community" is involved, or because something is or is not "organized" or because it takes "work" considered singly or even in combination.

Again within the limits prescribed above for dealing with definitions, and for present professional education purposes, I shall define social inter-group work as a deliberate educational process which aims: (1) to promote mutually satisfactory relations between groups through formal or informal means; and (2) to use these relations to further social work goals selected by the groups involved. My theory here is: If we could ever decide among ourselves what it is we are talking about, we could still use "community organization" or any other term as far as the public is concerned. If the



public ever comes to recognize us as a profession, the terms we use will be immaterial. No one's blood pressure goes very high when an M.D. speaks of osteomyelitis. They think *he* knows what he's talking about, because he gets demonstrable results!

Let us now examine the problem of generalized knowledge as it pertains to professional education for social intergroup work. As a teacher in schools of social work, as well as a practitioner who has had and still has his hand in the field of practice, I have been wrestling in and out of season with curriculum disorders. I have been through much since we had the nerve or misfortune to coin the term "group work" on the train going to the National Conference in Des Moines in 1927. Since then it went "social."

The first thing I discovered in trying to teach social group work was the alarming paucity of generalized knowledge of the social group. I knew that one could not practice case work without an understanding of individual growth and development, as well as other things. One must know how the individual "ticks" so to speak. Observation, recording, case analysis and treatment (not in this order!) are all built on the foundation of some hypothesis, wise or otherwise, Freudian, behavioristic, biological, instinctive, to mention a few—or combinations thereof. It took at least ten years of experimental study to discover what is now only a tentative hypothesis for the internal workings of the social process in the group and to square this off against even an eclectic hypothesis regarding the individual's inner workings. Such a task, also, with respect to community or inter-group life is still unfinished, as well as more retarded. And these analyses may be divided into structural, functional, and qualitative aspects.

One of the first problems in dealing with community life is to realize that "they're organized." It seems well for students to learn this rather early in their induction to the profession. Under the title, Social Welfare Organization, all our students,<sup>8</sup> whatever their intended specialization, get courses aimed to teach them how social needs give rise to social welfare functions, then agencies, local, state and federal. Historical treatment is involved, labor organization and the like. Along with these courses they have others designed to develop their understanding of individuals, their growth and development from the physical, physiological, emotional and mental sides, all integrated at different life span periods such as the prenatal, infant, childhood and adolescent periods.

Concurrent with these courses is a course on the dynamics of social

<sup>8</sup> In the School of Applied Social Sciences, University of Pittsburgh.

process, so they may see that society also is dynamic, moving, interacting with the individual's growth. We try to present workable, consistent hypotheses relative to group life and inter-group life. *For we believe that where two or more individuals are in psychic interaction, there are elements of individual, group, and inter-group relations involved.*

At the same time, also, students are having practice experience in the field. Some case work and/or group work courses and supervised practice precede courses and practice in the field of inter-group work. We cannot logically see how any other sequence would be meaningful.

In case work practice courses the student begins to apply the generalized knowledge in terms of a person to person relationship through a particular kind of social process known as social case work. Concurrent with these courses, field instruction, or clinical practice, in social case work is afforded in a social agency under the supervision of a qualified field instructor. The student begins to lose his lay attitudes and to assume the role of a professional person. At the same time he learns to participate as a student staff member in the agency experiences involved in a limited staff relationship. As time goes on, other class experiences are provided, aimed at widening and deepening the student's generalized knowledge of subject matter relating to the practice of social work. During the third and fourth semesters the student in case work specialization has a course in social group work for case workers, as well as concurrent field experience in leading a group, and limited group work agency staff relationships. It is here that he learns to deal with and through a more complicated kind of social process known as social group work.

For the student aiming to specialize in acquiring skills in this second type of social process (social group work), the situation is reversed with respect to practice courses and field instruction. During the third semester all students are provided a course in social inter-group work. Even though their specialization is in case work or group work, they have come to recognize a third focus of social process, one in which inter-group relations are in the foreground. By this time it has become clear to them, whether the group be characteristically two in number (as in the case work process) or whether the group be larger (as in the group work process), as well as when the group is *avowedly* a representative group and takes on the character of a so-called inter-group group, that *every social process has at one and the same time the elements of personal behavior, group relationship and inter-group relationship.* When the case worker interviews the client, for example, the two constitute a group, and both of them are representative of different groups.

The course in inter-group work enables the student to study records in which inter-group relations are of paramount importance as well as the subject matter, or "selected social work problems." It also enables the student to select some problem in inter-group relation with which he is familiar and concerned, and to make an analysis of how he might go about dealing with this problem. Through this procedure the student learns the nature of the social inter-group work process, and augments his knowledge of the particular subject matter around which the inter-group relations center, such as housing, recreation, child care, public assistance, and syphilis control. Then certain tentative principles are developed, and available inter-group work records are re-examined critically. Thus the student presumably gets an introduction and comprehension of inter-group work as one of the three basic social work processes.

Students specializing in inter-group work have concurrent field instruction in this area during the third and fourth semesters, as well as an advanced course in inter-group work. Up to this time field instruction has been in the Council of Social Agencies, but might well be in an agency such as a settlement, a housing authority, a community fund, or a community council. The particular subject matter of the agency's service would also have to be studied. Since the subject matter of inter-group relations in social work is so rapidly expanding, no professional school can possibly cover all this within the time allotted for work for the Master's degree. Selection and specialization and subsequent study are indicated.

I should add that all students have courses in social research, and during the third and fourth semester complete a thesis project.

There is wide variation in teaching community organization in schools of social work. This has been well illustrated in material prepared by a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee of the American Association of Schools of Social Work. Reports<sup>9</sup> are available and I shall not attempt to present them here. It is apparent that while there are some points at which teachers are in agreement, there is confusion and basic disagreement which I believe will take some time and considerable effort to resolve. Mention should also be made of the efforts within the structure of the Conference itself to clarify issues. Over the past few years some progress has been made, as indicated in the *Proceedings* and in the committee and sub-committee findings.

But there are difficulties now retarding progress with respect to both these efforts which I should like to mention. In doing so I am reminded of

<sup>9</sup> Available at the office of the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

similar problems which have arisen in the history of our professional practice and education in the areas of case work and group work.

Assuming that there are unresolved problems of analysis centering around every one of the definitions mentioned above, namely: group, community, profession, social work, and community organization, there is a major difficulty, I believe, with respect to basic hypotheses for understanding and interpreting community life, that is, social process in terms of inter-group relations. In other words, the dynamics of inter-group or community life are not clear. I am even willing to venture that a substantial group of students and practitioners do not even recognize that there is a problem at this point. We know that the teaching of social case work, and of social group work for that matter, never really bore fruit until generalized knowledge of individual behavior and group life became more communicable, and until this knowledge could be applied in terms of simple analyses of the role of the worker in the art of practice through case and group records.

Most community organization records I have seen to date are not written with much understanding of the dynamics of inter-group life. A case record, for example, is valuable only if its writer has had some scientific scheme for interpreting the human behavior involved in his practice. Otherwise he would not know what was significant and might observe and record most anything. Once teachers and practitioners of community organization unite their efforts with social scientists to accept even some tentative hypothesis of the dynamics of inter-group or community life, we shall have a better basis for attacking the next major problem. This is the development of an understanding of the nature of community organization as a social work process, a deliberate educational process.

Since there has been little recognition and understanding of community organization as *process*, and since many teachers and practitioners alike seem to have been focusing their attention on community and on organization in the structural, historical and critical sense; or on organization in the administrative sense; or on planning in the manipulative sense—in some cases on “bags of tricks,” it is not strange that eyebrows are arched when some suggest that the *same* generalized knowledge is equally essential for the case worker, group worker and inter-group worker. And, wonder of wonders, people practicing social work professionally in its inter-group specialization should be thought of in some quarters as eligible for membership in the American Association of Social Workers!

A third difficulty appears to be in the area of adequate field instruction.

A fourth problem appears to take the form of a confusion over community organization and administration. It seems to me that if the dealing with inter-group relations is oriented primarily to *authority* and is not primarily on a voluntary *cooperative* basis, that is, one in which the worker is essentially in a *helping* rather than a *directing* and controlling role, then the relationship is essentially an administrative one. A worker's relation to his client and to his executive are different kinds of functional relationships.

It is true that administration in the sense of authoritarian managerial control no more can be dissociated from consideration of inter-group relations than from consideration of inter-personal relations in any given group involved, or from consideration of internal adjustment of individuals. But administration as authoritarian control of one person *over* another, of one group over another, in the last analysis, is a vertical rather than a horizontal relationship.

If a council of social agencies, for example, or a community fund, is operated characteristically in vertical fashion as it deals with inter-group relations, that is with the groups (the social agencies) cascading up to one group or person with final authority, and with groups losing their autonomy, then, in my judgment the practice is *more* managerial and less professional in the social work sense than when a practitioner deals with a client whose personal life is not *directed*, or with a group whose program is not directed.

Administrative function in the social agency, as management with respect to funds and property, for example, is a legitimate and necessary thing, and of necessity is found in every social agency. Management and manipulation of the personal life of clients and the programs of groups and communities is not professional social work.

In reality, authoritarian controls are inescapably associated with the management of money, with the giving or withholding of funds and property. Where in the last analysis, mutually satisfactory relations are of equal if not of greater importance than the management of funds, the professional competence of the social worker is called for, plus the competence of management, which is not peculiar to any social work specialization, case work, group work, or inter-group work.

Putting it another way, the management of funds is often of equal if not of more importance to the tax-payer or the contributor. Any social worker may be called upon to administer funds. A public assistance worker must be competent as a person dealing with human relations and as a manager

or administrator of funds. Professional social work *and* administration are inextricably bound together. It is not actually a case of either—or, but of both—*and*.

There are, of course, other difficulties to be surmounted. In conclusion, and in spite of all these difficulties, it appears that community organization as an area of professional social work practice is on the threshold of significant development. Teachers as well as practitioners are joining in a number of significant study projects that should contribute much in the way of clarification. Teaching community organization *as a social work process* appears logical to me as a part of the professional curriculum only if it is established that dealing with inter-group relations in terms of social work objectives is the art we are seeking to develop.

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## CHAPTER II

### FUNCTIONAL SOCIAL AGENCIES—PRIVATE AND PUBLIC

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**F**UNCTIONAL social agencies may be defined as organizations that have direct contact with clients and administer services in one or more of the following broad fields of social work: family welfare, child welfare, health, and informal education and recreation.<sup>1</sup> These functional agencies, both private and public, provide channels through which the community organization process may be promoted. It is true that many of them do not think of their jobs in these terms. Most agencies have undertaken a fairly definite responsibility in the community, such as to provide relief for certain types of families. Some of them believe their obligation is discharged if they do this job well. At present, however, this is probably not the view held by the majority. The evidence suggests that most agencies today are "community-minded" and try to understand and to help improve community services.

Private agencies pioneered in the development of the community organization process. In an earlier day comparatively few public agencies undertook to do more than the immediate job assigned to them. This was particularly true at the local level. The exceptions were mainly state or federal agencies. Private agencies varied widely, of course, in their effectiveness. Some had slender resources and ineffective leadership. Others were the offspring of nineteenth-century paternalism and sought only to lighten somewhat the burdens of the poor. But for a good many decades there have been some private agencies—mainly in cities—that have been genuinely striving to improve social conditions. Some of these agencies have sought improvement chiefly through raising more money to carry on

<sup>1</sup> This division of social work into four fields is not wholly satisfactory, but it appears to be more widely accepted than any other scheme. Some of the social services, such as probation and social protection, fit equally well into more than one of these four categories; others, such as institutional care of the aged, do not seem to fit readily into any of them.

existing programs. But a few, at least, recognized that genuine advance means increasing the numbers of groups interested in understanding community problems. These agencies believed that this broadened understanding would, in turn, inevitably seek fulfilment in social legislation and improved public administration. In recent years increasing numbers of public social agencies have adopted a similar point of view. Hence a broadened base of activity in community organization may be expected from social agencies and social workers in the years ahead. Thus it is becoming increasingly important to consider the functional social agency, not only from the standpoint of its traditional program for clients, but also from the point of view of its potentialities as a medium for community organization.

#### THE PRIVATE SOCIAL AGENCY

Ideally, the private social agency should be controlled by persons representing diverse interests in the community. If the agency is nonsectarian, the major religious sects—Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant—should be represented. This does not necessarily mean that clergymen should be selected as board members, nor does it imply that every church in town must have a representative. It does mean that the religious affiliations of the board members should be sufficiently varied to establish clearly the nonsectarian character of the organization. Moreover, there should be recognition of the various economic, political, social, and racial groupings in the community. The following list suggests some of the kinds of interests that should be taken into consideration in selecting a board: an editor; a financier; a trade-union leader; certain public officials, such as the superintendent of schools, a county commissioner, a member of the board of county welfare; an individual belonging to a racial minority group; a woman prominent in the affairs of women's organizations, such as the League of Women Voters or the county Federation of Women's Clubs; a man active in the work of the men's service clubs, such as the Rotary or Kiwanis; a person identified with patriotic or fraternal societies, such as the American Legion, the Knights of Columbus, the Masons, or the Eagles.

Potentially, every member of the board of an agency is an interpreter of the agency's program and of the social problems the agency encounters in its work. If most, or all, of the board members belong to one social clique or are drawn from one economic level, the contribution of the board in the field of interpretation will inevitably be limited and will be addressed, in the main, to one segment of the community. Moreover, if an agency seeks<sup>25</sup> and obtains support widely in the community, it is under



some obligation not to limit control of expenditures and formulation of policy to a small group whose views may not necessarily be representative of local thinking on social questions.

In rural areas it is sometimes more difficult to obtain a representative board than in urban centers. In fact, the board may have to be larger in a country district in order to give the people a feeling that the principle of representation has been adequately observed. The population of rural counties often spreads out sector-wise around a half-dozen or more towns or villages that are trading centers. Competition and jealousy often characterize the relationships among these centers. In such cases it may be necessary to have a board sufficiently large to include at least one person clearly identified with the life of each of these towns or villages, as well as persons who live in the open country.

Actually, it is not always easy to create a board that is as broadly representative as has been suggested above. Sometimes men and women can be found whose interest in social welfare is so keen that they are willing to subordinate conflicting views in other areas in order to work together harmoniously for a community social program. This type of devotion to community welfare is, however, by no means universal. Very often interests or prejudices in other areas outweigh the community-welfare interest. In such cases it may be impossible to get representatives of antagonistic groups to work together effectively in support of an agency program. In a community in which bitter antagonism prevails between management and labor, for example, or where the color line is very sharply drawn, it may prove genuinely disruptive to try to get the two opposed groups to work together on a social agency board.

Even though it may be impossible to obtain a board that is genuinely representative, it should usually be feasible to disseminate control more widely than many agencies do at present. There is still a marked tendency among private agencies, both sectarian and nonsectarian, to draw their board members from the upper economic classes of the community. This practice lends prestige value to board membership and usually insures a minimum of friction in board operations. Moreover, there is a very practical reason for selecting board members who enjoy large incomes—they provide a kind of insurance that the budget of the agency will be raised. This was a very important consideration a decade ago in many communities because, in certain fields, the private agencies carried most of the responsibility. Obviously, if there is no public social service in a particular field, the private agency must do whatever is done. Under such circumstances the desire to be quite sure that funds will be available is not hard

to understand. The great expansion of the public social services in recent times has modified this situation markedly. At present many private agencies are operating in areas that would be covered reasonably well by the public services even if the private programs were dropped entirely. Under these circumstances there is less reason to be concerned that a budget of a given size be raised. It should, accordingly, be possible for many private agencies to broaden the base of representation in selecting board members.

Labor is less adequately represented among private agency boards than any large group in the community. It is true, of course, that labor in this country has traditionally shown neither the concern nor the interest in organized social welfare programs that has characterized the labor movement in some countries. Nevertheless, the working classes contribute large sums to organized charity in proportion to their incomes, and they should be encouraged to understand and to help direct the programs they thus support. There is some evidence that organized labor is beginning to adopt this view. At the national convention of one of the major labor groups a few years ago a resolution was adopted censuring a prominent national social agency for giving labor no voice in controlling the operations of the organization. Further evidence of an awakened attitude toward private welfare programs is contained in an annual report<sup>2</sup> of this labor group issued several years later. As the following excerpt from the report suggests, the desire to share control has apparently matured into a desire to share responsibility:

Our National Committee has arranged for CIO representation everywhere on the local, regional and national boards of the War Chests, and hundreds of our leaders are now serving on these bodies. This is one of the most important milestones of the year, showing how CIO is assuming more and more responsibility in the leadership of community life. We must integrate our organizations into our communities, lending to this new effort everywhere the social fervor and vitality which characterizes the CIO.

There are other ways of securing broad community representation, in case it proves unwise or impossible to bring together onto one board representatives of groups that are either mutually antagonistic or that have too little in common to enable them to function effectively in a common enterprise. An active program of committee work provides a means of drawing persons of diverse interests and talents into an organic relationship with the total program. The editor of a labor newspaper, who would not be interested in sitting as a member of the board of directors, might be per-

<sup>2</sup> "Report of President Philip Murray of the Congress of Industrial Organizations," in *Daily Proceedings of the Fifth Constitutional Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations*, Nos. 9-13, 1942, Boston, Mass., p. 116.

sueded to be chairman of the agency's committee on public relations and interpretation. The chairman of the crippled children's committee of the Masonic fraternity might be selected as a member of the agency's advisory committee for its child-care department. Bankers who are not willing to take the time to participate in the detailed operations of the agency are often glad to advise with respect to the investment of its endowment.

Time and ingenuity are required to attain and to retain a broad basis of support in the community. It is therefore important to understand clearly the purpose of such an effort. The purpose is not merely to keep the program going and to facilitate the raising of funds for its support. The more fundamental objective is to develop in the community a wide understanding of social needs, to the end that a majority may be persuaded of the desirability of developing new or enlarged means of meeting those needs.<sup>3</sup> It is this fundamental purpose that makes a broad basis of participation so essential. If each member of the board and each member of a committee achieves clear-cut convictions as a result of his agency experience, these convictions will to some extent be disseminated among the groups in which the individuals carry on their day-to-day economic and social activities. Thus each informed and convinced person becomes the most effective type of interpreter—namely, a person-to-person interpreter.

The private social agency is free to define its own intake policies. It can limit its service to certain specific types of cases, and it can also determine the number of cases it will accept. Agencies that follow this practice are said to have a "controlled intake." Public agencies, on the other hand, are charged by law with certain responsibilities. It is difficult, if not impossible, for them to refuse cases that fall within the area of their responsibility as defined by law.<sup>4</sup>

Private agencies should have a very definite purpose in mind in arriving at an intake policy. The purpose may be to select cases that will provide diversity of knowledge with respect to social problems in the community. Thus a private family welfare agency might accept some cases that would be eligible for local poor relief and might supplement some cases already receiving some form of public categorical relief in order to obtain a basis for evaluating the various public social services operating in the communi-

<sup>3</sup> For a very interesting account of a private agency's efforts in this area see Alice C. Brill, *The First Five Decades: A History of Family Service of St. Paul*, 104 Wilder Bldg., St. Paul 2, Minn.: Family Service of St. Paul, 1944. Pp. 52.

<sup>4</sup> In practice, owing to shortage of funds or to a narrow interpretation of responsibility, some public agencies achieve what is, in reality, a controlled-intake policy. Public agencies that do this, however, are in most cases, actually flouting the spirit of the laws under which they operate.

ty. Or the intent may be to accept cases that will yield thorough knowledge about one particular type of problem. For example, certain children's agencies accept only "neglected" children because they hope in treating these cases to study the causative factors that induce the neglect. In any case, it is clear that private agencies should analyze their intake policies carefully and frequently. In making this analysis the following questions may well be kept in mind: (1) What kinds of cases are not at present accepted by any agency in the community? (2) What kinds of cases will enable this agency to demonstrate a new type or a superior quality of service? (3) What kinds of cases will provide data that will enable this agency to speak authoritatively concerning the scope and character of some particular social need? Actually, the way in which an agency defines its intake will to a great degree determine the kind of contribution it will be able to make in the development of social awareness in the community.

A controlled intake is not the only advantage which the private agencies enjoy. In addition, large numbers of them are able to regulate with considerable consistency the size of the case load assigned to each worker. In public agencies the case load per worker often expands to dimensions that preclude effective treatment. In spite of heroic efforts on the part of outstanding public welfare executives, comparatively few public agencies have been able to maintain case loads at a size compatible with high standards of performance and with progressive personnel practices. Of course, some private agencies also impose similar limitations upon staff performance, often for reasons beyond their control. But the proportion of private agencies that succeed in maintaining reasonable and equable case loads is far greater than seems likely to be achieved in the public agency field in the near future.

The lower case loads in private agencies give them certain opportunities that are important in the community organization process. The primary purpose of a case record is to assist in case treatment. But the record can also be a valuable repository of information concerning the social needs identified in the course of developing relationships with clients and with collateral treatment resources. Agencies with high case loads per worker are compelled to restrict recording to the *minimum essentials*—and the material needed in individual case treatment obviously comes first. Private agencies with low case loads per worker are in a position to incorporate in their case records very revealing information based upon the observations made by case workers who are in daily contact with the end results of ineffective co-ordination of community resources or complete absence of them. Some agencies have been experimenting for some time with

this type of recording as the following statement indicates: "I have been re-reading some records in which treatment was handicapped by the lack of community resources. . . . [The] value of a body of such illustrative material cannot be over-emphasized. . . . We now have interviews which reveal the inadequate treatment resources for the unmarried mother and her baby, the young probationer of the Federal Court, the mentally handicapped on institutional parole, the feeble-minded children excluded from public school, etc. We also have most revealing interviews on abuses of parole by the parole officers, the terrors of solitary confinement, and many other community problems. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

Difficulties are encountered, of course, not only in recording material of this type in case records but also in making use of it, once it is recorded. Unquestionably, hundreds of case records contain revealing information of this character that has never served any useful purpose. Perhaps the facts were recorded in such a way that they could not be summarized. Or perhaps no opportunity was found to make the information known to interested groups. There is room for study and experimentation in this area. In fact, there is a crying need to find ways in which the facts known by case workers can be shared with other groups in the community. This is a challenge to any agency that enjoys enough latitude to initiate experiments. But so long as present conditions prevail, it would appear that the private agencies will, in the main, be the groups with continuing opportunity to devote energy to this kind of research.

Private agencies also are in a position to make a special kind of contribution to the development of public relations. The major part of the budget of most private agencies is derived from current contributions that must be renewed year after year. This necessitates continuous emphasis upon interpretation. If a new service is proposed or if an existing service is to be expanded, one or more citizen groups must be persuaded that the innovation is desirable. In some cities in which private agencies are financed by a joint community-wide drive, the annual budget of each may be reviewed by as many as three or four different committees before final approval is given. In reviewing these budgets the various committees are often obliged to examine the scope and quality of the public agency

<sup>5</sup> Excerpt from letter dated November 30, 1936, from Miss Carol K. Goldstein, of the staff of the United Charities of Chicago. The reference to the lack of resources to care for the unmarried mother and her child is of special interest. In 1944 a new service for unmarried mothers was established in Chicago. The United Charities, by recording its experiences with these cases, contributed to this development. Of course, other agencies and individuals also helped. It is worth noting that the final decision to create the new service followed a survey in which data were gathered directly from the case records of the United Charities and of other local agencies.

programs in the community in order to determine whether proposed changes in the operations of the private agencies are warranted. If this obligation is adequately discharged, the participating committee members acquire during the procedure a greatly enlarged understanding of the community's welfare problems.

In recent years social agencies have become increasingly aware of their obligation to interpret welfare problems to client groups. In the decade of the 1930's many public agencies were brought face to face with this need in their dealings with organized groups of the unemployed. Moreover, the new points of view in case work, which stressed, among other things, the importance of the client's own interpretation of his relationships to the community, implied an obligation to help the client to obtain an accurate basis for making judgments. Thus the whole area of interpretation to client groups assumed new importance, not only in community organization, but also in case work.

The effort to help clients to understand community welfare problems is not, of course, the exclusive responsibility of the private agencies. Public agencies likewise share this obligation. But private agencies are, in some instances at least, in a favored position to carry on this activity. They do not operate under an administration that is identified with one or another political party. Hence they escape the handicap of suspicion that so readily attaches to a governmental organization. Moreover, in many communities, there is less need for the exercise of caution in the program of interpretation sponsored by private agencies. Any governmental service can become the target for political recriminations. Government employees who advocate new programs are likely to find themselves aligned with one political faction against another. Hence their interpretation necessarily seeks mainly to explain present programs rather than to stress unmet needs and to advocate new means of meeting those needs. Private agencies, however, have a freer hand in this matter. The State Charities Aid Association of New York, for example, has been able to point out needed welfare developments to a series of state administrations of opposite political faiths without becoming identified with either party.

Client groups, except in periods of widespread unemployment, are usually heavily weighted with persons suffering from physical, emotional, and educational handicaps. Hence the problem of interpretation to this group presents special difficulties. The effort must obviously be adjusted to the capacities of the client and his group and must therefore, to a considerable degree, be individualized. Private agencies are peculiarly equipped to adjust their interpretation to the capacities of special groups.

Some of them limit their intake to persons of one racial or religious background or to clients presenting certain kinds of handicaps. Moreover, for many decades private agencies have been the chief spokesmen for the individualized approach to social problems. Their methods and their outlook have therefore long been adjusted to that approach. It would seem reasonable to expect that, for these reasons, public relations programs of the private agencies might be able to reach groups that elude a mass approach and might also contribute to the development of new methods of interpretation.

#### THE PUBLIC SOCIAL AGENCY

Most of the public social agencies that serve clients directly, operate on a town, township, city, or county basis. With comparatively few exceptions, the public agencies operating at the state and federal levels exercise supervisory authority and engage in research but do not deal directly with clients. A majority of the public functional agencies derive their authority from state law. If federal grants-in-aid are involved, the local service may be indirectly subject to federal control, since the grants are usually available only to those states that impose upon the local administrative units certain minimum standards set by the federal authority. In the main, however, local governments act as agents of the sovereign state in carrying out the welfare functions.

This means that it is very difficult to generalize with respect to the structure of public agencies. Some of these agencies are operated directly and exclusively by elected public officials, such as boards of county commissioners. In rural counties particularly, these elected officials sometimes handle the actual details of administering certain of the public social services. In other instances the elected officials appoint a commissioner or an executive to operate the program and give him a free hand in directing the work, though in such cases, of course, ultimate authority still remains with the officials who exercise the power of appointment. Elsewhere authority may be vested in a board of lay citizens appointed either by local or by state officials. The extent of the control exercised by these appointed boards varies considerably. The program may be so specifically defined and so minutely supervised by the state authority that very little latitude is left to the local board. Or the lay board may find it difficult to develop policies independently because of the veto power exercised by the elected officials from whom appropriations must be obtained. In other instances, of course, the local board of lay citizens has considerable independence and, within the limits set forth in state laws and regulations, exercises broad discretionary powers.

Likewise, there is no uniformity with respect to the functions of local public agencies. In some jurisdictions part of the public welfare program may be in the hands of one board and the remainder may be the responsibility of another local official. Some administer poor relief only. Others are responsible solely for the so-called "special forms of relief," including Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, and Aid to Dependent Children. Although federal grants have tended to bring together into one local administration the "special forms of relief," or "categories," as they are sometimes called, there are, nevertheless, some states in which Aid to Dependent Children is still handled by the juvenile court. In some jurisdictions almshouse intake is handled by the authority that administers home relief; elsewhere the two services may be in the hands of different local authorities. Moreover, in many jurisdictions one service may operate on a township basis while other related services operate on a city or a county basis. In short, there is so much variation both in the structure and in the functions of public agencies that statements with respect to them usually must be modified somewhat to fit the particular case.

At least one statement can be made, however, that applies with equal force to all the many varieties of public agencies: they need to be understood by as many of the local citizens as possible. Many of the local public social services are new; they do not even exist as yet in all of the states. New political administrations might conceivably curtail or abolish some of them. Their continued existence and gradual improvement depend largely upon public support and approval. The older public social services, particularly public poor relief, have been improved somewhat but are still quite generally substandard. Further improvements here must likewise wait upon wider public indorsement.

The public agency therefore needs interpreters of the types described above in the discussion of the private agency. The local elected public officials who control the program can, and usually do, interpret it. But such officials are often to some extent suspect. The public thinks they are interested parties and that their capacity to give an objective evaluation is limited. The same opinion sometimes prevails with respect to appointed local boards, though usually not to the same degree. The public recognizes that elected officials may later seek re-election and that their pronouncements may be colored by their political hopes. Likewise lay board members are not expected to speak critically of the services they have been appointed to direct. In general, however, it is probably true that an appointed board of local citizens who do not depend upon office-holding for



their livelihood can gain a wider hearing for a program than local elected officials.

Local administrative boards of citizens are usually not large. Frequently the number authorized by law is three, five, or seven. Thus, by reason of numerical limitation, the public agency provides a smaller number of potential interpreters than the private agencies with their larger boards. On the other hand, it is often easier to obtain a representative group to serve on a public agency board. Membership on the board of a private agency is usually regarded as an honor, to be accepted or rejected at pleasure. But nomination to a public board is more likely to be interpreted as a call to duty. People will accept appointments to public boards who would not consider election to the board of a private agency. Moreover, they recognize the inclusive character of a public service and the need for representative control. They will, therefore, agree to serve with fellow-citizens whom they might consider unsuitable for membership on the board of a private agency in which they were interested.

Citizen participation is achieved in some public social services through the appointment of advisory committees. Such committees may be appointed either where the service operates under elected officials or where it is intrusted to a small board of lay citizens. Sometimes there is a single advisory committee that considers any type of problem referred to it. Or there may be a number of smaller advisory committees, each responsible for providing consultation with respect to some special segment of the work. Thus there might be a medical advisory committee, a case committee, and an advisory committee on vocational placement. Unless there are local reasons for adopting the latter plan, it is best to have a single advisory committee and to give that committee power to organize such subcommittees as may be needed. In this way a larger number of people obtain a broad view of the total program of the agency. For example, if there is an advisory committee of twenty-one persons, it is desirable for all of these individuals to hear the recommendations brought in by the medical subcommittee rather than to have these recommendations transmitted directly to the agency by the small group responsible for assisting with that phase of the work.

Advisory committees, as their name implies, usually do not exercise power. In most cases they are not even authorized by statute and exist only because the responsible elected or appointed officials believe they are an asset. Yet, in actual practice, these committees often prove to be very influential. The officials with actual administrative power may entertain such high respect for the judgment of the advisory group that they are un-

willing to ignore their recommendations. And the group may have moral prestige in the community that enables it to intervene successfully in case the program is endangered by political interference.

The functions of an advisory committee are ordinarily defined by the power that appoints. In most cases there is a hope that the committee will supply useful advice relative to difficult cases, help in the formulation of policies, and assist in interpreting the program to the public. There can be no doubt as to the usefulness of such a group if it is really representative of the various interests in the community. In a sense the collective opinion of such a body is a miniature poll of public opinion. In the beginning the committee usually expresses itself only on those questions concerning which its opinion is sought. Later, after a period of successful operation, it may volunteer opinions concerning policies it has studied and discussed.

The advisory committee may also help to raise the standards of service of the agency. If the committee has been carefully selected, it will include some members who are familiar with good standards. Some may have served as employees or board members of other local agencies. Useful experience of a disinterested character is thus placed at the disposal of the public service. Through subcommittees, the advisory committee may assemble information with respect to such matters as qualifications of personnel, standards of relief, case loads per worker, and so forth and lay these facts before the administration, together with its recommendations. In a few cases, advisory committees have formulated examinations and corrected papers to assist in selecting personnel. This is done, of course, in absence of a statutory merit system and is a means of shielding the administrative officials from the importunities of unqualified job-seekers.

An advisory committee may also be of real service in establishing or improving relationships with other local agencies. Misunderstandings among social agencies are still all too common in most communities. In many cases the employed social workers in the agencies can iron out these difficulties through conference. Sometimes, however, conflicts arise that cannot be resolved by the social workers employed by the agencies concerned. In such instances, improvement in relationships may often be attained through the active efforts of the elected officials (or of the administrative board), or of interested and informed lay citizens. Unfortunately, elected officials are sometimes indifferent with respect to interagency relationships; or they may prefer to ignore such problems because they sense the possibility of unfavorable political repercussions. Hence the employed social workers in the public agency are sometimes handicapped in dealing

with other local agencies, perhaps because of the attitude of the elected officials under whom they operate or perhaps because it has been difficult or impossible to establish a common basis for discussion. The lay citizen member of the advisory committee may be in a very favorable position to bridge this gulf. He may be a contributor to the agency concerned, or he may know some of the members of the board of that agency. Moreover, placing negotiations in the hands of the advisory committee may decrease the emotional content of the discussion.

It would be unrealistic to assert that all the complex community relationships of the public agency should be built up through the efforts of lay advisory groups. Obviously, most of the relationships will be developed as a part of the day's work, either by the responsible board or official or by the employed staff. But in the occasional, difficult situation the lay group can often gain a hearing where the employed staff or the responsible elected official would meet only with rebuffs.

Usually the advisory committee will not be told in so many words by the appointing authority that one of its jobs is to interpret the program to the community. Nevertheless, the appointment of an advisory committee always implies a hope on the part of the responsible authority that the citizen group will help to allay criticism in the community and will promote sympathetic understanding of the work. From the standpoint of community organization, the chief contribution of advisory groups is to interpret and to promote. This is not to imply that lay members of advisory groups spend a large part of each day in telling their fellow-citizens about the public welfare agency and the unmet needs it has discovered. It means, rather, that the lay members of the advisory committee come to be regarded as responsible sources of information about the social programs and social needs of the community. In addition, the more highly developed of these groups undertake to enlist the aid of other organized bodies in promoting social legislation and improvements in public administration.

It is usually not wise to press local elected officials to appoint an advisory committee if they are not obliged by law to do so and if they are opposed to such a plan. Better results will be achieved if advisory committees are organized only after the elected officials are convinced that such groups have something to contribute. The initial effort, therefore, may be in the direction of persuading the responsible elected authority that some benefit may accrue from the appointment of a lay advisory group. There is no reason why this question cannot be brought to the attention of the

appointing authority by the employed social worker in charge of the program. Usually the key to the appointment of any committee is that there is a problem to be solved or a job to be done. To suggest the appointment of an advisory committee solely on the grounds of the theoretical desirability of such a move could usually not be expected to inspire the appointing authorities with enthusiasm and might easily arouse their suspicions. Hence the strategy of proposing the appointment is to wait until there is a definite problem with respect to which the services of such a committee would appear to be useful.

If this approach is inexpedient or if it proves unsuccessful, some help may be obtained from the state welfare department. The traveling supervisors who represent the state department know whether advisory groups are being used in other jurisdictions and can tell the local authority how they have functioned and whether they have been a source of strength to the program. Occasionally a local citizen may also make an effective approach on this matter. In most communities there are a few men and women who carry great weight in cases of this kind because they are known to be genuinely and unselfishly concerned to promote the general welfare of the community. A suggestion from such a person that lay participation would be helpful might be the deciding factor. It is not necessary, of course, for the appointing authority to be enthusiastic about the prospect of having a lay advisory committee. But to force the appointment of such a group if there is genuine resistance to it will probably not result in a productive type of relationship.

In some jurisdictions social workers and laymen identified with social work have urged the use of advisory committees because in the back of their minds they cherished the hope that the lay advisory body would become an effective opposition group. Often this attitude reflects an inability or a reluctance to establish constructive relationships with the official group that is charged by law with responsibility for the program. Advisory committees are not likely to develop the habits and attitudes that will inspire increased integration of effort in the community if they are constantly pitted against those who have been legally chosen to carry the administrative responsibility. The members of a competent advisory committee may sometimes be out of sympathy with the policies adopted by the responsible officials and may decide it is their duty to make their views known. But the first effort of all those related to the agency is to try to understand one another and to exercise forbearance where differences of opinion are involved. The basic responsibility of the employed staff in

the community organization process is to promote the co-operation of groups, and this can seldom if ever be achieved by cultivating hostilities and by evading the obligation to begin working with any responsible group at the highest level the group is capable of understanding. The advisory committee should not be expected to bear the brunt of any hidden animosities toward those in control of the program.

If a lay advisory committee is appointed, it should be genuinely representative. Various interest groups of the types enumerated in the discussion of private agency boards<sup>6</sup> should be considered. The constituent geographical units in the jurisdiction must also be taken into account. It may be convenient, but it is usually unwise, to appoint a majority from the county-seat town of a rural county. The advisory committee will achieve maximum usefulness only in case it is broadly and genuinely representative. The size of such a committee will therefore be determined to some extent by the variety of interest groups that are to be represented. This means that many such boards will include from fifteen to twenty-five members, though some may be considerably larger. If the advisory group is authorized by statute or if it is provided for in regulations issued by the state department of welfare, the number of members may be prescribed. Where this is not the case, the objective should be to organize a group large enough to reach most of the major interest groups, without attaining a size that would make the transaction of business difficult.

In many parts of the country, local public agencies undoubtedly have inherited traditions that are difficult to live down. Traditionally, local poor relief was administered rather haphazardly with little or no supervision from the state. In very few places, indeed, was there any feeling that the local authorities ought to make recommendations looking toward the improvement of the service. If the grosser forms of suffering were relieved at a reasonable cost, the total obligation of the authority was generally considered to have been fully and admirably discharged. This tradition is slow to die. There is still a widespread conviction that local welfare authorities ought to do what the law requires and no more. For them to interpret their experience is regarded by some citizens as a meddlesome impertinence likely to end in added expense for the taxpayer. Such an attitude reflects, of course, a very primitive view of the functions of government. If any service is necessary—and there is wide agreement that the welfare services fall in that category—then the taxpayer is entitled to frequent reports as to how the service may be made more efficient and more

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 69.

constructive. The public agency that accepts the passive role traditionally assigned to it is therefore not abreast of modern thought with respect to the responsibilities of those selected to administer the programs authorized by the state.

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## DOCUMENT 2-A

### ADVISORY BOARD<sup>1</sup>

The Advisory Board of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, which has functioned since the organization of the Bureau, continues to assist the Director of the Bureau of Public Welfare and the Board of Commissioners of Cook County in the development of policies and techniques. Five meetings of the Advisory Board were held during the current year.

The advantages of an advisory board to the executive of a public agency, to the elected governing body, and to the public at large are not limited to the counsel which the board may give. The members of the advisory board have an opportunity to know the workings of the agency and are in a position to interpret to the community the agency's program. The President of the Board of Cook County Commissioners has been guided in his relationships with the Advisory Board by the following principles:

1. The Advisory Board should be officially appointed by the elected governing body to whom it should be responsible.
2. The membership of the Advisory Board should be predominantly technically qualified to give counsel in the agency's field of service.
3. The executive director of the agency must desire the counsel of an advisory group, must know how to keep their interest and how to utilize their possible contributions.
4. While the Advisory Board has no administrative authority, its recommendations should have at all times the earnest consideration of the executive director and governing body.

The Advisory Board of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare has a present membership of 51 persons in addition to the 15 members of the Board of Cook County Commissioners who serve in an ex-officio capacity. The Director of the Bureau sits with the Advisory Board at its meetings, as do other members of the administrative staff whose services are being discussed. An analysis of the membership by vocational interests shows the following: social workers, 26; educators (mostly schools of social work), 6; lawyers, 4; doctors, 3; businessmen and other laymen (including members of administrative boards of social agencies), 12.

The Advisory Board elects its own officers and recommends to the President of the County Board for appointment the names of persons who, in its opinion, would strengthen its membership. The present chairman of the Advisory Board is director of the Chicago Council of Social Agencies.

<sup>1</sup> Copied from *Annual Message of Clayton F. Smith, President, Board of Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois, for the Fiscal Year 1939*, pp. 27-28.

## DOCUMENT 2-B

### CASE WORK IN A CHANGING SOCIAL ORDER\*

Within our own generation social workers have not until now been called upon to adapt their theories and practices to swift and radical changes in social conditions. But the continuing depression with its shocks and dislocations and the growing numbers of the economically disinherited have brought us face to face with inevitable modifications in the various forms of social service with which we are familiar. We are witnessing in social work a tremendous increase of responsibility, a growing uncertainty concerning the adequacy of social programs and their permanent value in meeting social needs, and a mounting dissatisfaction with some of the basic concepts and methods which we believed had become thoroughly established.

The most obvious factor of change in our present situation is the existence of large-scale economic maladjustment affecting the welfare of a majority of the population. This is accompanied by an extraordinary decrease in our national income which brings in its trail reduced funds for public welfare, a dwindling of surplus income available for private philanthropy, and a lowered standard of living for the mass of individuals.

The social problems of industry are highly complicated and refractory. Failure to solve them is chiefly responsible for the continued mass of economically maladjusted individuals for whom social agencies exist. This failure and the remedial and palliative nature of social case work we are now recognizing, although no one can be overly optimistic that the recognition of these problems has as yet accelerated their solution.

The problems with which social agencies were concerned before the depression are likely to be magnified in the ensuing years. We face a large increase in the standing army of the unemployed augmented from time to time by further technological changes, an increased difficulty in absorbing into gainful occupations the less effective and the partially handicapped members of our working population, the vanishing of opportunities for satisfactory vocational adjustment of the young, the possibility of low wage standards in many occupations, and a further shrinkage of the potential working life of the average individual with a more rapid displacement of the middle-aged.

\* By Harry L. Lurie, executive director, Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, in *Survey*, LXIX (February, 1933), 61-64.



The growing acceptance of the fact that basic economic factors are involved in many of the social problems of the dependent family and the individual constitutes the important change in our outlook. To what extent the present organization of social work is taking these basic factors into account becomes therefore of the first importance. We have assumed in many of our discussions that in case work we deal with the entire personality in relation to the whole social setting. But we are beginning to realize now that we have overstressed personal factors and influences and have disregarded or underemphasized the impersonal factors and impersonal relationships of the individual to the social and economic order. This is true no less in relief administration and family case work than in psychiatric service and mental hygiene. All along the line we have assumed the existence of freedom of opportunity for adjustment of the individual and have blinked the gross obstacles to adjustment which exist in the social order.

We have given much less attention than was desirable to the organized economic basis for individual and family life. We possess little direct understanding of how desirable standards of living may be obtained for the community as a whole. We have not gauged satisfactorily the adequacy of our institutions to buttress family security during periods of stress or the occasions of hazards such as unemployment, illness, old age, and disabilities. Similarly in our dealings with problems of behavior and psychological maladjustments we have stressed in our analysis the sequence of causal factors and of emotional experiences and have underemphasized the importance to individual behavior of social standards and conventions. For example, in dealing with delinquents we have concentrated our analysis largely on the personal factors of maladjustment, biological, sexual, and temperamental, and have given little attention to such demoralizing factors in social life as the venality of business and of politics, and the prevalence of unethical practices sanctioned or connived at by prevailing public opinion. In dealing with problems of the neurotic we have stressed personal and emotional factors; the strains imposed by the existence in the community of moral standards and conventions which impose overwhelming difficulties on the individual have been overlooked. In treatment, as in analysis, our efforts have been concentrated unduly within the possibilities of the clinic and of relationships between the client and the professional worker.

Accompanying our program for improving social welfare through individual case adjustments we have developed an over-intensive service for those individuals or families that present either particularly difficult per-

sonal problems or the need for long-term relief. This was perhaps a logical, though largely ineffective, substitute for adequate social provisions. In some instances case work service assumed that because of the need for continued relief, the responsibility of the agency was not properly discharged unless relief was accompanied by a host of other services such as medical treatment, education in domestic science, budget management, and the care of children. Social workers began to assume more responsibility for directing the affairs of the individual and his family than would ever have been intrusted to them if the clients had not suffered from shortage of income.

There is a growing reaction toward this enlarged responsibility for details of family life. We are more concerned than we used to be with the dangers of emotional as well as financial dependence. This swing towards leaving secondary problems to the client himself has its drawbacks as long as the community fails to provide the resources of information and service which individuals require and which they cannot obtain easily under present circumstances. If we recognize that we cannot or should not handle such services on a case-by-case basis, it is essential that we see to it that the sources from which they may be obtained are properly organized and readily available.

What I am trying to point out is that many of the activities and methods of case work have been necessary because of the lack of more comprehensive provisions for family security. This is not a new idea in social work but in a sense we are rediscovering it during this period of depression. Several decades ago social work was deeply concerned with the improvement of general social conditions. Then came a period of concentrating on psychological adjustment. Now we have completed the circle and are back to our starting point. True, we are returning with some new knowledge, but even leaders in the mental hygiene movement now talk less about mental conflicts and pathological family relationships than they do about recreation facilities, financial security, and employment opportunities.

This trend in our thinking has been accelerated by the gross economic problems resulting from the depression. No longer can we overlook the fact that much of the maladjustment and distress with which case work deals is rooted in inadequate or faulty economic and social organization. It becomes impossible to continue to concentrate our interests exclusively in the field of personal relationships and personal adjustments.

Since the new direction in which social work must go if it is to continue as a dynamic factor in social improvement is so clearly evident, we may

well begin to question what values remain in case work and how it can continue to be of service to the general program of social work. Perhaps it will help this evaluation to think of case work not as a single procedure but as a general term covering various forms of professional service. I should like for the moment to separate the general term "case work" into three types of service: first, a method for dealing with the administration of some relief fund or community resource; second, a special method required for individualizing treatment in the administration of various social provisions; and, third, a service not primarily related to the administration of welfare provisions but dealing with the individual on the basis of his lack of satisfactory adjustment.

It is obvious that these divisions are not mutually exclusive but represent variations in process. It would be harmful to the development of social work to think that these services call for radically different techniques or varying grades of professional personnel. But for practical purposes of administration it is important to keep in mind the relative requirements of different phases of social service. Above all we must relinquish all ideas of case work as a field of social work and think of it exclusively as a process in social work programs.

The requirements of case work service vary from the performance of administrative details primarily clerical in their nature to services requiring the most subtle degrees of skill and insight. Whether little or much case work service is required in the administration of any general social provision is dependent largely upon the basis upon which it is established. For example, take the provision for old age relief. Theoretically, an old age relief bill could be so drawn that it would approximate a pension system similar to the various forms of compensation for veterans or to the European insurance plans. Determination of eligibility thereby becomes a relatively simple matter requiring only such routine procedures as proof of age, residence, citizenship, identity, and so on, the determination of which does not require the skill of social workers. On the other hand, if eligibility is determined by resources and needs and presumes an absence of other possibilities for adjustment, a process of case study is required. Similarly, if the intention of the old age provision is not merely to furnish a measured amount of income but is concerned with other phases of individual welfare, case treatment is required which probably calls for the skill of social workers. Such intention is understood in the administration of aid to dependent mothers, which has for its objective not only the supplying of income but also of services to assist the family in its general adjustment.

But even in the administration of provisions such as those for depend-

ent mothers we are beginning to recognize that, while the introduction of case treatment may be highly desirable for a part of the group served, it is not essential for the entire group. The use of case work therefore in the administration of these general provisions which are broadly drawn becomes a task of selection; a distinct departure from the assumption that all recipients of aid require supervision and intensive service.

The type of case work which is not directly concerned with administration of relief is illustrated in the field of probation. The determination of whether an individual convicted of an offense may safely be supervised in the community requires careful social study if it is to be more than mere leniency in dealing with first offenders. Of the group under probation there are some who may require only official contacts which amount to supervision of conduct. There are others who must receive attention amounting sometimes to an intensive effort to redirect the individual along lines of occupation, health, family, and personal adjustment. As in other fields of social work we are recognizing here that individual case work efforts are frustrated as much by a disorganized community life which tolerates economic greed, political dishonesty, and undesirable personal conduct as by ingrained habits and fixed attitudes.

The conclusion to be drawn from this agreement is that the future of social work lies more in the organization of social forces than in the methods of case work. The program of the social agency needs to be redefined with a clearer recognition of the obstacles which hinder service and with more attention to organizing effective social remedies. Case work, however skilled and however valuable for other forms of maladjustment, is usually a poor substitute for inadequate income and is not a genuine solution for the problems of poverty. Some reorganization in social work is now necessary because we have previously erred in this direction. Because some instances of poverty were closely related to factors of personal maladjustment and yielded to individualized treatment, we assumed that such treatment was generally applicable and constituted a program for dealing with poverty in general. This assumption unfortunately coincided with the wishes of those reactionary elements in our society which resent changes in the basic arrangements of our social and economic system.

We must not, however, be so unwise as to proceed to the other extreme and assume that all forms of individual distress are the results of social factors and indicate lacks in our social organization. Even if such an assumption were valid, we could scarcely expect an immediate social reorganization which would eliminate the problems of individual maladjustment. It is increasingly the task of the social worker to distinguish clearly

between those problems which demand constructive changes in our social provisions and those which by their nature will not yield readily to the organizations and devices which we can set up. Some form of organized relief will probably always be required no matter how far we progress with new social provisions, such as unemployment insurance. In the administration of relief, case work is definitely required not only because of the variable factors of individual situations but primarily because of the assumption, thoroughly ingrained in the public mind, that the need for relief is an evidence of individual rather than of social maladjustment. Relief measures which discard this assumption will require less intensive case work and will instead emphasize economy and efficiency of administration.

No matter how some of us may feel about the emphases introduced into case work by extreme psychological theories, we need to recognize that these theories have made definite contributions to practice. There are many individual problems for which a personal relationship is required and there is value in what the case worker can offer to the client on this basis. What these psychological theories may have lacked and what they are rapidly obtaining at the present time is a balance concerning the extent to which the factor of social maladjustment is involved in the general case loads of social agencies. An intensive personal relationship between a client and a case worker is unquestionably useful in many situations frequent in an unstable society such as ours with rapid changes in culture. But this relationship is probably not required in a large proportion of work which is primarily social rather than personal in its nature. Neither a therapeutic relationship nor the case work method in its entirety should be considered an adequate substitute for social or economic opportunities. There are many personal problems which can be solved by adequate opportunity. In any event, case work which relates to individualized methods of education and adjustment is likely to emphasize increasingly the voluntary acceptance of its service by the client. Less and less will such services be an expression of supervision and regulation.

The lack of an adequate social basis for case work is particularly apparent at the present time. It is responsible for many unsatisfactory relationships between social workers and clients suffering from the problems of unemployment. It is all too obvious as mass poverty develops that the agencies that can offer only, or at least primarily, case work are inadequate instruments for the times. Unable to help the client to a constructive solution of his real difficulty, unemployment, case workers are driven to take refuge in well-meaning attitudes which are little more than an

acknowledgment of defeat and then to rationalize that defeat by pointing out the therapeutic values to the client of those interviews of frustration in which he pours out resentment against the social order or laments the harshness of the circumstances responsible for his failures. We say: "A client often derives new spirit from an opportunity to discuss past work-history and responds eagerly to practical suggestions for securing references, reapplying to former employers, visiting employment agencies, and so on. There is often little possibility of his securing immediate work but at least his attention is once more focused on work rather than passive dependency." And thus we think we save our faces.

This is something that social workers cannot regard with complacency. It is a hopeless, palliative attitude suitable only for dealing with chronic invalids or with those tragic handicaps for which nature provides no cure. The community has no right to force social workers to assume such a role in relation to problems which require vigorous programs and for which the client is justified in demanding a solution. We observe, we sympathize, and we send the client away, or we think we do, with a renewal of false and futile courage. If we do not rebel against such a basis for our efforts, then professional social work as a dynamic factor in social improvement is indeed doomed. Case workers must contemplate with dismay a future which would permit no better use of their ability and their skill within the social organization.

I do not want to give the impression that I believe that the solution of the problems of social work organization depends wholly upon changed viewpoints and more definite understanding of our own place in the picture. We need to stand forth boldly and courageously lest valuable contributions we have made in the past and can make in the future be lost in the pressure to set up systems of mass relief. The general dislocation in our economic life may easily bring about a reversion to a primitive type of social work. It is already evident that we have been largely unsuccessful in interpreting case work to the community and that the public remains unenlightened or unimpressed by many of the values which we find in our programs. With the situation as it is today there is a natural tendency to see the major responsibility of the community in terms of food and shelter. As funds run low, false economies are being substituted for minimum standards and the self-respect of the individual is being sacrificed. As relief-giving reverts to alms-giving, standards of service in both public and private social work are seriously threatened. While this may be inescapable during the present period, we should be aware of its implications and of the difficulties ahead if social work is to be restored to its former level.

The future of case work lies, it seems to me, in a more effective integration of its method with programs of social work. We should define the social problems for which we have used the case work method in terms of the lack or the ineffectiveness of existing social and economic provisions for security of income, occupational adjustments, family relationships, and the relation of the individual to the group. From such an analysis we should be able to discern the required changes in our organizations and should begin to determine priorities. We need not be prophets to know that our full force must be directed toward the attainment of economic security, minimum-wage standards, community planning, and the better organization of public health and recreation, as well as toward special educational and clinical facilities for helping to meet the common problems of sexual adjustment, personal hygiene, and domestic economy. As better economic and social provisions are established, we shall find new uses for the case work method in administration and many opportunities for that personal relationship between case worker and client which stimulates the process of individual education and growth.

Our immediate obligation to the changing times is to begin to formulate those forms of organized social service which may profitably use the case work method and to relinquish the idea that case work in itself is the key to the solution of major social problems. Although such a change may involve considerable reorganization of our thinking, it offers to the professional worker the possibility of increased usefulness in an enlarged field. The case worker must become more of a social worker intent upon the solution of social problems and less of a technician skilled in methods of adapting individuals to the status quo. If social work is to progress, its practitioners must expand the field of their concern. Our success in so doing is neither certain nor assured. We shall need courage and optimism and some, but not too much, caution.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES

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**I**DEALLY, all agencies in the community, both public and private, should be seeking identical or closely related objectives. In practice this seldom occurs. The private agencies, which, in general, tend to work together more consistently than the public agencies, constitute in many communities a kind of "bloc," playing a dominant role in joint planning and joint action. If the public agencies remain outside this "bloc," they do so, as a rule, by choice, either because they are completely preoccupied with their own programs or because they see little to be gained through close association with other public and private agencies.

In some places the relationship between public and private agencies is characterized by antagonism and a spirit of criticism. To some extent this is a tradition inherited from the past, which may be further accentuated by wide differences in professional standards. Where this situation exists, the community organization activities of the social agency group as a whole fall short of desirable standards of effectiveness.

The establishing of good relationships between public and private agencies is therefore a step of great importance in community organization. The most promising approach is at the treatment level. Once there is an accepted tradition of co-operating effectively in the day-to-day job, the initiating of joint enterprises at the developmental level becomes easier.

The impediments to good working relationships arise most commonly in relation to division of the field. More specifically, troubles can arise with alarming ease in relation to intake or acceptance of cases, transfer of cases, and the sharing of responsibility for the same cases. In every community that supports more than one organized agency, a clear-cut division of the field should be arrived at through conference. The resulting agreements and the intake policies of each agency should then be reduced to writing. In spite of these precautions, marginal cases will arise in which



it is difficult to decide where responsibility rests. There should be an agreement that, in any case of doubt, the agency receiving the application should always clear with the other organizations that might possibly think the case belonged to them.

A "refer" is a case in which the original agency remains active but calls upon another agency for supplementary services.<sup>1</sup> Such cases are also sometimes called "co-operative cases." A "transfer" is a case in which the original agency relinquishes responsibility by inducing another organization to assume full charge. In all such cases the agency proposing to refer or transfer should be responsible for initiating discussion in order that complete agreement may be reached before the client is actually sent to the other organization. Failure to observe this rudimentary courtesy has often engendered hard feelings and a conviction that one agency wants to pass along its unpromising cases to some other organization.

The procedures to be used in refer and transfer should result from conference among the agencies concerned and should be in writing. If possible, one agency should be completely responsible for all of the service to its clients. But there are numerous instances in which one agency must call upon another for certain supplementary services. When this occurs, there should be routine clearance at frequent intervals to prevent the possibility of working at cross-purposes. The likelihood of friction in such cases is reduced if the number of workers involved is held to a minimum. In some instances it may be feasible for one worker to handle all cases in which co-operative treatment relationships with another agency are involved. Periodically—perhaps every six months—existing agreements with respect to transfer, refer, and division of the field should be reviewed by the agencies concerned in order to keep such agreements always clearly in view and to amend them as occasion demands.

After arriving at a satisfactory division of the field, the private agencies should be prepared to make the major portion of the adjustments. The functions of public agencies are defined by law; hence they usually cannot make immediate, sweeping changes in program. Private agencies, on the contrary, can and sometimes do effect drastic alterations in policy or program to meet some special need. Limitations of resources, of course, restrict both the number and the character of the changes which the private agencies can institute, as do tradition and the conservatism of boards of directors. Most agencies, public or private, are reluctant to modify too

<sup>1</sup> With respect to new applications, the term "refer" is also often used to indicate that an applicant is sent to another organization because the case does not fall within the existing intake policies of the agency to which application was originally made.

sharply a program that has been carried for years and has, as a result, won substantial respect in the community. Nevertheless, there is an inherent flexibility in private agency organization that imposes a heavy responsibility when circumstances arise that require swift modifications of program.

This responsibility relates primarily, however, to the immediate change. In the area of community development, where long-range changes or enlargements in program are the focus of interest, the public agency should bear at least an equal responsibility. The long-range program can usually be realized only after a prolonged educational effort, which depends for much of its effect upon the assembling of evidence. Since the public agency usually has contact with more cases than all the private agencies combined, it must necessarily be the source of most of the factual data. The public agency also shares the obligation to promote in the community an understanding of the facts which its work unearths. Like the public school system, the public health service, or any other technical public agency, it is under obligation to suggest periodically the kinds of improvements that would be beneficial to the community.

#### THEORIES CONCERNING PUBLIC-PRIVATE RELATIONSHIPS

Discussions of public-private relationships almost invariably revolve around the question: "What is the soundest division of the field between the two groups?" Since the programs of the public agencies are defined for the immediate future, the question of greatest concern often is: "What program should the private agency adopt?" A great many answers to these queries have been suggested, at least two of which have been elevated to the dignity of theories. One of these, known as the "Extension Ladder Theory," was propounded by Sidney Webb and appears as a document following this chapter. The other, known as the "Parallel Bars Theory," was worked out by Benjamin Kirkman Gray. Both theories stem from the premise that the private agency has an important contribution to make and is, indeed, essential in the present stage of development of group provisions.

The Extension Ladder theory advocates that all cases in need should "be on the books" of the public agency. The public agency would be expected to make sure that every case received assistance sufficient to bring it up to a "standard national minimum" level of well-being. The private agency would enter the picture only after this minimum had been provided. The task of the private agency would be, metaphorically speaking, to erect an extension ladder above and beyond the foundation of the standard national minimum. Thus some cases would be currently "on the

books" of both the public and the private agency. Such cases would be taken by the private agency because they seemed to offer an opportunity to demonstrate an improved quality of service or because they seemed suitable for experimenting with new therapy. The private agency would thus, according to this theory, be dealing with a smaller number of clients than the public agency but would be offering a more varied and a more daring type of program.

The Parallel Bars theory likewise contemplates a standard-setting and standard-developing type of program for the private agency. But there is no thought here that all cases must be "on the books" of the public agency. On the contrary, the private agency is to do everything that is done for the cases it accepts. The chief purpose of the private agency, according to Gray, is to handle its cases in such a way as to react favorably upon the standards and practices of the public agency. Thus the Parallel Bars theory resembles the Extension Ladder theory in envisaging a distinction in function between public and private services but differs from it in proposing, in addition, a clean-cut division of cases.

The practices that have developed in the United States appear to have been wholly independent of theory and vary from one extreme to the other. In a great many jurisdictions there has traditionally been a division of function—particularly in the fields of family and child welfare. For example, a private family agency would undertake the treatment of a case but would rely upon the public authority to supply certain basic necessities, such as fuel and rent. In a smaller number of places—chiefly the places where public agencies have developed reasonably good standards—there is a division of cases between public and private agencies. In such communities the public agency does all that is done for the families it accepts. This may mean, of course, that the limited number of families accepted by the best private agencies receive higher standards of care than the great majority that must depend upon the aid offered by the public service.

The discussions of public-private relationships over the years have apparently done more to clarify the role of the public agency than to define the function of the private charities. It is instructive, for example, to take a poll of opinion as to the kinds of cases that ought to be the sole responsibility of the public agencies. With respect to clearly identifiable disabilities, such as unemployment, old age, or feeble-mindedness, an overwhelming majority will usually express the view that private agencies are not justified in spending their resources on such cases because they are so clearly a public charge. Opinions begin to differ, however, when the prob-

lems are reached that are obscure in origin or that seem to imply personality difficulties. Thus cases involving marital discord, inability to adjust to employment, or similar complications would seem to many social workers peculiarly suitable for private agency intake. The difficulty is, of course, that there are so many such cases that private agencies cannot possibly accept them all. Thus, though the private agencies may make important contributions to methodology by limiting their intake to such cases, it is also true that the public agency will be dealing with large numbers of similar situations and, therefore, needs to be equipped to do something constructive with them. Some social workers believe that the public agencies should be equipped to undertake the treatment of any type of case—including those that require the low case loads and specialized personnel found in the best private agencies. In actual practice, however, it is clear that this objective will not be attained in the near future—especially in the field of family welfare. In the meantime, though there is wide agreement that the public agencies should handle the great bulk of the cases of need in the community, including all of those that present relatively uncomplicated problems, there is difference of opinion as to what can be done or should be done beyond that point.

It is worth noting that a great many assertions have been made relative to the quality of private agency programs, which a critical evaluation would by no means sustain. This is partly because private agencies cover a wide range of standards. The poorest private agencies are at least as bad as the old-style county poor relief that used to be handed out in baskets from courthouse basements. The best private agencies, on the contrary, are real pace-setters. Many that lie between these two extremes are making no contribution sufficiently conspicuous to justify their continued existence in the community. Hence it is essential to bear in mind that discussions concerning the role of the private agency relate to those agencies with standards that imply capacity to analyze, adapt, and experiment.

It is erroneous to assume, on the other hand, that experimentation cannot go forward successfully under public agency auspices. Undoubtedly the very heavy case loads in many public agencies limit the effort that can be expended on this type of enterprise; nevertheless, an increasing number of the good public agencies have succeeded in obtaining appropriations for departments of research and statistics and for initiating experiments or demonstrations. As a matter of fact, public agencies have been making contributions of this kind for a good many years. For example, some of the great improvements in the treatment of the offender have been worked out by public functional agencies—e.g., the New Jersey parole system.

Likewise, some of the important advances in the care of the insane and of other handicapped groups have been the result of thoughtful, scientific work in the great public institutions. A few of the public agencies, such as the United States Children's Bureau, have, of course, devoted a major part of their effort to exploration and demonstration.

No one denies that the private agencies, for their part, have made in the past and are continuing to make contributions in methodology. This seems to be particularly true in the field of informal education and recreation. In spite of the larger financial resources at the disposal of the public agencies in this field, the chief exploratory efforts and the experiments in the group work process are still made, in the main, by the private agencies. In the relief field the substitution of a scientific budgeting procedure for the earlier system of haphazard doles is largely a product of private agency effort. In the children's field the private agencies have made significant contributions in several directions, notably in the development of boarding-home programs. Psychiatry in case work has also been introduced and developed largely as a result of the interest and effort of private agencies.

Agreement is now quite general that private agencies should, if possible, plan their programs to include experimental efforts. But, because private agencies in urban areas are so numerous, this involves the risk of considerable duplication. Most cities would probably be better off if they had fewer private agencies, for many of them are making no significant contribution. But, even if the inferior private agencies could be eliminated and their resources made available to the remaining organizations, there would still be need for the public agencies to be active on the research side of the program. In other words, it would not be a desirable division of the field to make the private agencies uniquely responsible for experimentation and demonstration.

It has sometimes been said that the revenue of private agencies is fitful and that the cost of the program is distributed very unfairly. It is undoubtedly true that the revenue of private agencies may tend to decline in periods of depression when the need for service is at a peak. It is also true that support comes mainly from the generous and from those to whom appeals can easily be addressed. These objections are important, however, only in communities where the private agencies are attempting to carry a very substantial proportion of the responsibility for a particular service, as was the case in the relief field in New York City, for example, prior to the depression of 1929. Such criticisms lose much of their force if there is a competent public agency to shoulder the burden, for the private agencies can then define and limit their intake. In any community those

with the vision to attempt innovations are in the minority. Moreover, the importance of a private agency program bears little or no relationship to its size; hence a small program, geared to the resources that can be mustered, may be of major significance in the community. Inevitably, the principal supporters of an experimental program will be the small group who have the courage to back a new and unproved idea.

In this connection the major problems that face the private agencies are these: (1) to devise a program that holds real promise of revealing a need or of demonstrating a method or a standard of service; (2) to convince the supporters of the agency that the proposed program merits support. It is not easy to project a path into an uncharted area. To do so requires an intimate knowledge of the community, a thorough understanding of social welfare objectives, and, above all, creative imagination. Moreover, the task of enlisting support is usually difficult. This part of the job requires the capacity to interpret needs and to evoke enthusiasm. The social agency which endeavors to inspire its supporters to undertake unfamiliar work must be prepared to face a long pull.

#### THE PRIVATE AGENCY PROGRAMS OF THE FUTURE

Interesting suggestions relative to probable programs for the private agencies of the future have emerged in various fields. The largest number have come from the family welfare group. One suggestion is that some of the private family welfare agencies should experiment with a program that lies entirely outside the field of destitution. Such a program would be concerned exclusively with nonrelief services and would focus upon the social and emotional adjustments of individuals and families.

Numerous arguments can be advanced in support of this proposal. Any person who has had a prolonged opportunity to observe the results of case work knows that in many instances great benefits accrue to the client. Treatment fails in a fair proportion of cases, as it does, for example, in the field of medicine; but if it succeeds, the results are highly beneficial to the client and his family and, indirectly, to the community in which they live. But at present case work service is available to very few people above the poverty line. Economic need brings the family to the attention of an organization that is equipped to give consideration to problems other than the economic difficulties; and often the related problems are primarily responsible for retarding the development of self-sufficient relationships within the family group. A family not in need of financial assistance, however, may never gain access to case work service, even though there is an awareness that some kind of guidance is needed in the home.

The number of families that would accept and would perhaps be greatly aided by such services can only be estimated. Those who have lived in settlement houses know that there are many cases in which skilled case work services would be of inestimable value in neighborhood families that are financially independent. Teachers in the public schools can likewise give evidence on this point. The large number of patrons of the so-called "small loan companies" in large cities suggests that in many families there arise crises that are undoubtedly accompanied by major stresses within the family group. Many of these families need the counsel of a skilled adviser. Often they are not aware of their rights and know nothing about the resources they could call upon to help them out of their troubles. The helpful advice they need would be offered to them as a matter of course if they were destitute and sought the aid of a social agency. The program proposed for private agencies would be designed to meet the needs of this group, or at least to demonstrate that there is a genuine need for which some community provision should be made.

Some private agencies have already made an approach to this type of program. An examination of the monthly statistics of some of the leading family welfare agencies shows that in a number of them more than half of the clients do not receive material relief from any source. These agencies are attempting to reach a group for whom no case work provision has previously existed. Few, if any, private agencies, however, have withdrawn entirely from the field of destitution. To do so would necessitate the sacrifice of an emotional appeal upon which they are obliged to depend in their solicitation for funds. Moreover, to have absolutely no funds for relief would occasionally be a serious handicap. A family that is financially independent at the date of intake may become destitute a few months later. Assuming that good treatment relationships have been established, it might mean a serious threat to those relationships if the agency had to withdraw at the point which the family believed was its hour of greatest need. On the other hand, it is often pointed out that certain families badly in need of case work service will not seek that aid at an office known in the neighborhood as the place where destitute people go for help. At present most family agencies interested in this problem appear to be attempting some exploration of the new field of need without wholly relinquishing the area with which they have so long been identified.

Another proposal is that private family welfare agencies limit their intake to cases involving large commitments, such as a public agency probably could not make. The man released from the penitentiary is sometimes cited as an illustration. The prison record will make it difficult for

that man to obtain employment. He might succeed, however, if he could be set up in a small, independent business. Such a plan might involve the immediate investment of a considerable sum of money—for example, two thousand dollars. On the other hand, if the man fails to find work, he may be dependent upon relief for a period of years at a cost exceeding the investment required to establish him in business. The precocious child in the poor family provides another illustration. Under the proposed program the agency would assume responsibility for educating the child. This would mean a commitment extending over a period of years and would involve frequent reshaping of plans as opportunities for self-help were developed. Up to the present no well-known agency has restricted its intake<sup>2</sup> exclusively to cases of this type, although a few have occasionally accepted cases involving large immediate expenditures or engagements presumably extending over a range of years.

A good case can be made for increased emphasis upon this type of service by private agencies. The number of such cases thus far accepted represents a very small proportion of those that might be succored by such means. Sidney and Beatrice Webb once proposed<sup>3</sup> that programs involving an extended opportunity for training or retraining be carried on at public expense for the group known as the "work-shy," but their proposal has never been adopted. Probably no public program of this type would have much chance of adoption in this country unless its worth had first been clearly established by demonstrations under private auspices.

Perhaps the one dogmatic statement that can safely be made about the programs of private agencies is that they achieve maximum usefulness in the community only by retaining a high degree of flexibility and sensitivity to changing needs. Document 3-B, at the end of this chapter, provides an interesting illustration of a program that seems to meet this standard. The agency was founded to provide a purely charitable service to inmates and patients in state institutions. The original plan was to pay friendly visits to coreligionists in state institutions and to serve as an intermediary between patients or inmates, on the one hand, and the families of these individuals, on the other. The annual reports of the agency disclose a most interesting record of development. The excerpts quoted in Document 3-B are perhaps sufficient to show the way in which the program changed as

<sup>2</sup> There are a few scholarship associations in large cities. These organizations usually limit their efforts to the field of secondary education. In other words, they supply funds to enable children to remain in school who would otherwise be obliged to apply for work permits.

<sup>3</sup> Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English Poor Law History*, II, Part II: "The Last Hundred Years," 1010-11.



the agency's experience revealed new areas of need. The beginning of the change is already evidenced in the second annual report. Here the agency indicates that it has branched out from its original plan to render service to specific individuals and has embarked on an effort to create new treatment resources. The fourth report reveals further expansion. By this time the organization has sensed its duty to stimulate the state to provide more nearly adequate standards of care for all those under treatment in the state institutions. Ultimately, the agency came to believe that its firsthand experience in the institutions imposed upon it an obligation to act as an educational force in the state. Throughout the entire series of reports there is clearly evident a desire, not to cling to a fixed pattern, but to be flexible in modifying the program to meet the needs revealed in the day-to-day experience in the institutions.

#### THE RELATING OF PRIVATE PROGRAMS TO PUBLIC SERVICES

In some communities the relationships which have sprung up between public and private agencies as a result of co-operative efforts in behalf of the same clients appear to have halted at a very unpromising stage. It is reported from one city that approximately one-third of all cases accepted by the public agency are "co-operative" cases. In these cases the relief is supplied by the public agency, and the service and treatment are provided by the local private agencies. There is, however, no consultation concerning treatment plans. The private agencies assume full responsibility for helping the family to work out its problems, and the public agency accepts the passive role of supplying the material aid. Clearly, this kind of relationship is not promising. Even though the public agency is not at present equipped to offer significant treatment, the private agencies cannot in good conscience accept permanent responsibility to provide the total volume of professional service needed in the community because the volume of skilled treatment needed is far in excess of what they can supply. Hence, one of their chief obligations is to try to help the public agency to equip itself to provide a significant part of this service. Consultation on specific cases in which the public agency is giving the relief may be difficult and disheartening, but it is one of the natural approaches to an objective which the private agency should regard as basic—namely, the strengthening of the public services. For it is only when they begin to see their jobs in similar terms that public and private agencies can co-operate effectively in helping to develop a real community program. In other words, collaboration at the treatment level paves the way to co-operative effort in the community organization process.

Many private agencies, of course, do make a persistent effort to understand the problems of public agencies, to relate their own programs to the developments in the public field, and to lend support whenever possible to the leaders responsible for the administration of the public social services. An interesting illustration of this approach is provided by an experiment undertaken a few years ago by the Jewish Charities of Chicago. This agency is a federation that carries on fund-raising and planning activities on behalf of the Jewish social agencies of Chicago. In 1938 and again in 1941 the board of the Jewish Charities held a meeting, the purpose of which was to help the board members to enlarge their understanding of the welfare problems of the city. In reality, each meeting was an intensive two-day institute. Each member of the board was presented with a mimeographed document approximately one hundred pages in length. This document contained a wealth of factual data, charts, statistics, etc., relating to the operations, not only of the Jewish agencies, but also of the public agencies and of certain private agencies whose programs seemed likely to be brought into the discussion. In addition, at key points in the documents, questions were posed which would presumably provide a starting-point for analyzing current problems. The following questions abstracted from various sections of the documents<sup>4</sup> illustrate some of the purposes of the meeting:

1. To what extent does the Jewish Social Service Bureau satisfy needs on the part of the Jewish community for family service and relief?
2. Shall it be our definite policy that relief needs are to be met primarily, if not altogether, by public agencies with or without supplementation by the Jewish Social Service Bureau?
3. Why, in a period of great re-employment, should not the expenditures of the Jewish Social Service Bureau be materially reduced?
4. What will be the effect of recent legislation (on case loads), such as Old Age Assistance and Unemployment Compensation?
5. Shall we advocate the organization or development of a *complete* community chest in Chicago?
6. Has the Jewish Vocational Service developed as planned? That is, has it become more and more a vocational guidance agency?
  - a) How can this agency plan for the future of people now being placed

<sup>4</sup> Permission to use these materials was granted by Samuel Goldsmith, executive director of the Jewish Charities of Chicago.

- so that they will not be displaced readily when the curve of employment begins to fall?
- b) What has the agency done specifically about refugees?
7. What quality of service is provided to the aged inmates of the county infirmary? What is the effect of the supplementary services we provide for the Jewish patients in the county infirmary? Is there need for further consultation with the county commissioners relative to the medical and social needs of both Jewish and non-Jewish patients at the infirmary?
8. Is a merger of our two children's agencies desirable and feasible?

As the foregoing list of questions suggests, the members of the board undertook during the course of the institute to: (1) evaluate the programs operating under their direction; (2) appraise the relationships between these programs and the services provided by other agencies, both public and private; (3) acquire a sense of direction with respect to future developments both in their own agencies and in other agencies in the community.

The week end invested in this analysis was productive. The group achieved a greatly improved understanding of the complex pattern of public and private welfare services in the community and arrived at new agreements as to their own responsibilities in relation to this total pattern.

#### MERGERS IN THE PRIVATE FIELD

In recent years a great deal has been said about the need to effect mergers in the private agency field. Some people advocate this development because they believe a smaller number of separate administrative units would result in more economical and more efficient management. Others stress the extreme segmentation of the field of practice and point to the need for a pattern that is easier for the average lay individual to understand, especially in urban centers where the number of agencies is often excessive. Undoubtedly these arguments have merit. But a more persuasive reason is the growing recognition that specialization should be organically related to generic services. For many years social work has been moving in the opposite direction—that is, new agencies have been created because the need for specialization was apparent. A number of these specialties were originally carried as a part of the program of a generalized relief or family welfare society. As separate programs they undoubtedly were able to offer improved service to strictly limited groups of clients and to give more intensive study to specific types of problems. But apparently

there has been a turn in the tide. Some leaders have become convinced that specialization is more effective if it is not isolated administratively from generic practice. They believe, for example, that specialists are needed in dealing with problem children but that the opportunities for consultation are multiplied if this specialized care emanates from an administrative unit in which family welfare and other kinds of case work problems are also a part of the organization's daily job. As a result of the spread of these points of view, a number of mergers of private agencies have occurred in recent years, some of which have attracted widespread attention because of the long and distinguished record of service of the agencies involved.

Whatever the benefits of mergers may be in strengthening case treatment, it is clear that their effects upon the community organization process depend upon the way in which the amalgamation is accomplished. Presumably the agencies that unite are each supported by at least one interested group in the community. If the merger results in loss of interest on the part of any of these groups, the community organization process suffers. On the other hand, a merger may result in enlarging the objectives of the groups affected, each being willing to seek its former aims within the framework of a more comprehensive purpose. If this occurs and if the groups affected continue to work with undiminished interest, the merger has undoubtedly resulted in improved integration of community life. Before mergers are effected, however, there should always be a careful appraisal of their probable effects, not only upon case treatment and administration, but also upon community organization.

#### NEW ATTITUDES

There was a time when some of the people actively identified with private social agencies believed that good social work could never be developed under public—or, as they preferred to say, “political”—auspices. The experience of recent years has done much to dispel that view. At present most people recognize that the great bulk of the social services must be administered by public authorities. They also see that many of these public programs observe high standards of social practice and that even the poorest are not so impossible to improve as they once seemed to be. This change in attitude toward the public social services has necessitated a reconsideration of the functions of the private agencies—particularly of the nonsectarian organizations. Though there may not be agreement as to the work such organizations should undertake in the community, there is undoubtedly a growing recognition that the program should not be a mere

extension or duplication of an existing public service. Everyone wants the private agency to be "different." The agencies are responding to this demand, and the group as a whole is to a greater extent than ever before occupying an area of service that has increasingly direct significance in community organization.

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### DOCUMENT 3-A

#### THE EXTENSION LADDER THEORY OF THE RELATION BETWEEN VOLUNTARY PHILANTHROPY AND STATE OR MUNICIPAL ACTION<sup>5</sup>

There seems, on first thought, nothing in common between the impulsive response of the heart to the appeal for charity and the coldly ordered activity of a government department. But in a densely peopled community, whether of the Old World or the New, with all the complications of city life, philanthropy itself becomes complicated, and charity perforce organized.

Thus we see, alike in the cities of the United States and in those of Europe, the up-growth of great philanthropic corporations. On the other hand, the government itself becomes differentiated in structure as in function, and learns how to make use of volunteers. Thus, we find, on the one hand, an extensive substitution for the personal distribution of alms, of independent corporations and societies administering, through salaried officials, funds voluntarily subscribed for the purpose; and, on the other, a great and growing use, as part of the governmental machinery, central or local, of the unpaid and voluntarily serving amateur. We see, in fact, the paradox that a large and growing part of the activities of the voluntary agencies in great cities are exercised, not by volunteers, but by a paid bureaucracy; whilst over an extensive and steadily increasing field the operations of the local or central government are carried on, not by officials, but by unprofessional volunteers. We have been groping our way to a clear and rational theory as to the proper relationship between the government, on the one hand, whether national or municipal, and the voluntary agency, on the other.

The idea that there ought to be any deliberate organization of our charitable feelings, or that there can be any systematic relation between individual philanthropy and the action of the state, is a comparatively modern one. There are still many good people among us who instinctively resent any discouragement of the personal impulse to give alms or to perform "good works" as a religious duty by which we "acquire merit" or do glory unto God, quite irrespective of the effect really produced upon the recipients and beneficiaries. To them, at least in theory, personal charity is everything.

<sup>5</sup> Sidney Webb, *Survey*, XXXI, No. 23 (March 7, 1914), 703-7.

On the other hand, there are still amongst us representatives of the unspoken views of the "early Victorian" economists, who regard every kind of philanthropic action as a hideous mistake, calculated to undermine the independence and lessen the energy of the poor, and even to promote the survival of the unfit. To them, personal charity and government provision are, at least in theory, alike anathema.

Leaving aside, for the moment, these extremists on either side, let us deal simply with the facts. We have in the field both voluntary philanthropy and government action, and therefore, necessarily, some relation between them. What ought it to be?

To determine this we must first have clearly in our minds the specific advantages and actual potentialities of each of these instruments. In the United Kingdom of today, and I presume also in the United States, voluntary agencies are superior to the public authorities in three main features: in invention and initiative, in their ability to lavish unstinted care on particular cases, and in the intensity and variety of the religious influences that they can bring to bear on personal character.

In the domain of social pathology, we are, as yet, only groping in the dark and experimenting. The opportunity and capacity for originating new developments in the treatment of individuals lie principally with the voluntary agency. The public authority is bound down by law, as well as limited by the disinclination of the local taxpayers to expend money in unfamiliar ways. "We must not experiment with the public money" is perpetually an effective plea. All sorts of prejudices and dislikes amongst the elected aldermen or councillors have to be considered. In a voluntary agency, a person with new ideas, or a group of enthusiasts for new methods of treatment of particular cases, can put new devices to the test of experiment.

Looking back on the social history of the last hundred and fifty years, we must recognize that nearly all the successful developments in the United Kingdom as in the United States, in the way of collective provision for any class, have been preceded and rendered practicable by private experiments. This is true of practically our whole educational organization, from the kindergarten to the university, from the primary school to the reformatory, from cookery instruction and manual training and special schools for the defective to university extension courses, and vacation schools.

The same sort of philanthropic experimenting with voluntary organization and private funds has preceded, and is still preceding, the official organization of the public health service, from paving and cleansing and

lighting the streets to the provision of a constant water supply, from isolation hospitals to tuberculin dispensaries, from health visiting and schools for mothers, to school clinics and convalescent homes. And there is still much to discover and to learn. The future hides within it, we may hope and assume, as much as we have found in the past. It is the first, the highest, and in many ways the most useful duty of voluntary agencies to perform this indispensable service of invention and initiative and perpetual experimenting in the unknown.

The second specific feature of the voluntary agency, and one which gives it an enormous advantage in its appropriate sphere, is that the volunteer worker or the voluntary institution can, if desired, lavish a wholly disproportionate amount of care on a difficult case or a difficult class of cases. The salaried teachers or inspectors of a public authority must "do equal justice to all their clients"; the unpaid volunteer can spend days and months on one particular person or family that may seem to call for more concentration and thought and feeling than the ordinary run of cases. A beneficent patron may spend his whole capital on establishing one particular institution of a special type, perhaps for a class of persons statistically of no great importance to the community. And as in the case of experiment and invention, though volunteers and voluntary agencies may fail in ninety-nine cases, the hundredth case which turns out to be a success may be of untold importance to the community.

Finally, we have the significant fact that it is only through volunteers and voluntary agencies, that, in England and I suppose also in the new England, we can bring to bear, in the treatment of any individual or class of individuals, the specific religious atmosphere. It may be that this is not an inherent distinction between voluntary agencies and state action. It may be that in some communities, in some phases of public opinion, we might have the public authority providing an intensely religious atmosphere for those whom it succors or treats.

But, given the strong feeling against any preference by the state for one denomination over another, and the strong objection to submitting any person to the influence of a creed with which he may not agree, or with which his parents may not agree, or with which the taxpayers who bear the cost may not agree, it is practically impossible to bring to bear on the individual treated in a public institution those potent reformatory influences which are evoked chiefly, and perhaps exclusively, in an atmosphere of fervent spiritual faith of a specific religious denomination.

As to the real efficacy of such spiritual influences opinions will differ. We may recognize that they are not appropriate for all cases, nor for all kinds



of treatment. But it would be both blind and intolerant to deny their value, and even their extraordinary potency, in some of the cases, and along with some of the kinds of treatment to which they are appropriate. None but fanatics would object to making use, under all due safeguards, of voluntary agencies which offer to provide an apparently efficacious treatment, with a definitely religious atmosphere, at less cost than that at which the state can itself do the work, for those sufferers who already belong to the particular denomination in question, or who, being adult, deliberately prefer such an institution to that which the state provides.

There is, indeed, every reason to believe that without some such arrangement, we cannot, in fact, do what is best for the fallen woman or the inchoately criminal child—perhaps also for some types of the congenitally feeble-minded, the habitual inebriate, and the “work shy.”

The three specific advantages of voluntary agencies are accompanied by equal specific defects from which public authorities are free.

The first of these drawbacks is the unfair incidence of the cost of voluntary philanthropy. It must be stigmatized as a distinct disadvantage that those who actually bear the cost of these agencies are few and far between, and the bulk of citizens are excluded from a charge to which all should contribute according to their ability. This characteristic incidence of the cost of all private philanthropy amounts, in effect, to a penalty on the good and conscientious; and is, at the same time, equivalent to a bounty on those who are selfish and without public spirit.

Moreover, the financial basis of voluntary institutions is not only inequitable, but the revenue thus obtained is extraordinarily fitful, and its collection absorbs the time and energy of the organizers to an altogether extravagant extent. It has been said that half the time of the promoters and managers of the best and most approved voluntary institutions is absorbed in raising subscriptions to support them. It is this which makes the voluntary hospitals of the United Kingdom the most extravagantly wasteful of funds and energy of all the departments of our common life.

The second great drawback of voluntary agencies springs partly from this financial uncertainty, but partly also from their sporadic and, so to speak, accidental growth; it is practically impossible for voluntary agencies to perform any task, or execute any service, completely and continuously.

The most picturesque example of this lack of completeness and continuity would have been discovered by a citizen of London in the middle of the eighteenth century. In those days it was left practically to each individual, or to voluntary associations of individuals, to pave, and light,

and cleanse the streets. The service was naturally very discontinuous. Here would be a patch of stone cobbles, then a heap of mud, following that a deep hole, and possibly a plank or some cinders as an agreeable alternative. One house would have a lantern, and the next ten would be without them. The watchmen were long limited practically to such "select" quarters as St. James's Square, where the inhabitants decided that they had valuable property to protect.

It was, in fact, the impracticability of getting any complete and continuous action from voluntary agencies that led to the first great municipal enterprise of paving, lighting, and watching the streets. The provision of schools for poor children was long the favourite service of private philanthropy. But such schools failed altogether to cover the whole ground; and it was only the desire to give complete and continuous education to all children that led to the establishment of the local education authority, with its compulsory rate and its compulsory attendance. The local health authority had to be called in to supply the deficiency in hospitals, as soon as it was considered necessary to have the means of isolating all infectious cases everywhere.

Whenever it is considered necessary, with regard to any particular service, any particular class of patients, or any particular treatment, that it should be extended to every case, or to every part of the country, or for the whole period of the contingency, the community finds it impossible to depend on voluntary agencies. The public authority alone can insure a provision that is universal, ubiquitous, complete, or continuous.

Closely connected with the inability of the voluntary agency to give complete and continuous treatment to the cases that it purports to undertake is its inability to "compel them to come in"; its powerlessness to enforce submission to treatment or to the conditions of efficacious treatment; and, withal, its helplessness in the way of prevention. This lack of power in the voluntary agency, as contrasted with the public authority, the inability to alter the social environment, to change the industrial conditions, to arrest the course of evil influences, to ward off physical calamities, at once disqualifies the voluntary agency for the supremely important task of preventing the occurrence of the destitution that springs from adverse environment. But the same disability cripples the voluntary agency in its action on the individual.

The most disastrous effect, from the standpoint of personal character of the volunteer and the voluntary agency, is that treatment is not and cannot be accompanied with any enforcement of obligation. The voluntary agency stands open to those who choose to accept it, and equally open to

those who choose to leave it. It is perpetually drifting, whatever the intention of its promoters, into a curious kind of subsidy to the wayward impulses of those who are in need.

A sick person may go from dispensary to dispensary, from hospital to hospital, taking the advice, or swallowing the medicine that he gets, with or without any proper maintenance, with or without any hygienic lodging, even pursuing a course of life bound to result in an aggravation of the disease which he professes to wish to get rid of.

All the voluntary charities for children, however good their effect may be on the child, are necessarily unconnected with any enforcement of parental responsibility; sometimes, even, a demoralizing system of bribes has to be adopted to induce the parents of the children to let them enter in. It is extraordinary that persons who are really concerned about the maintenance of parental responsibility should prefer to see an organized system of providing school dinners for the hungry at the expense of private philanthropy—which cannot by any possibility be connected with the enforcement of parental responsibility on merely negligent or drunken parents—instead of the provision being intrusted to the local education authority, which can and might make it an effective instrument for raising the standard of child nurture and compelling all parents *who could afford it* to keep their children up to the higher standard.

When we leave the ordinary normal citizen and his family, and pass to a consideration of the mentally defective, it becomes clear that all treatment, however benevolent, if it is to attain its ends, must necessarily be accompanied by a certain disciplinary supervision and enforced control, involving powers which are not easily granted to voluntary agencies. Wherever the case requires compulsory removal, segregation, detention, or control, the public authority must intervene as responsible for safeguarding the liberty of the subject.

Once we have realized the characteristic qualities and defects of voluntary agencies on the one hand, and public authorities on the other, we are in a better position to determine what should be their mutual relationship.

We see, to begin with, that it is vital, in the public interest, that no case should go undealt with; and that no treatment should be left unfinished. Thus, however good and effective may be the voluntary agencies at work, the public health authority, as the only organization covering all the field, has necessarily to look after births and "search out" all dangerous diseases. However excellent may be the voluntary agencies in education, it is the public education authority that must see to it that no child grows up below the prescribed standard. However benevolent may be the

voluntary agencies dealing with the mentally defective, it is on the public lunacy authority that we put the responsibility for getting all lunatics and idiots under proper control.

Thus, in all these great departments of the work, we see that the public authority cannot content itself with dealing with some, only, of the cases. Wherever there is a reason for its intervention, it must have all the cases on its books. The prescribed national minimum has to be insured and enforced, at all times, as regards every case. And whilst, on the one hand, this indispensable minimum is secured to everyone—as we cannot, for our own sake, allow anyone to fall below it—it is indispensable that personal obligations and parental responsibilities should be enforced with equal universality; and that there should always be, along with the treatment, the due measure of disciplinary supervision and control, according to the nature of the case, to insure that the individual co-operates in his own cure. For all these purposes the voluntary agency is disqualified and inappropriate.

On the other hand, though the public authority concerned must be responsible for the adequate treatment of all the cases needing attention, this does not mean that it need do, for all cases, everything that needs to be done. There is, as we shall see, an enormous part of the work which voluntary agencies can do better than the public authorities, in which they can bring to bear their specific advantages on particular cases or classes of cases, or in particular parts of the treatment of all cases.

In every branch of social work, with regard to every conceivable class of case, there is the utmost need for the initiative, the inventiveness, and the practical experimenting which voluntary agencies have so much at their command. Moreover, there is practically no part of the field in which we do not find particular kinds of need which require and which would repay the devotion to their service of an amount of individual care and thought and money altogether disproportionate to their statistical importance, which it is seldom within the power of any public authority to bestow. And we shall most of us consider that, alike for children, for the feeble-minded, for certain classes of sick persons, for various types of able-bodied men and women who have fallen out of regular productive work, and possibly for others, there is room for institutions and personal ministrations of more distinctively religious character than the government of today will be permitted to organize.

Thus it is quite impossible to dispense with or to exclude voluntary agencies; and it is clear that their part in any effective national campaign against destitution must be a large and important one. Nor is there any

ground for restricting their co-operation to the "deserving" case. As the late General Booth of the Salvation Army rightly insisted, it is just those whom we call the "undeserving" who present the greatest difficulties to state action, and for whom the special services of voluntary agencies are often most applicable. This is equally true of the later form of discrimination adopted by the London Charity Organization Society.

It is not alone for the cases that are classified as "helpable" that the state needs the co-operation of the voluntary agencies. Many of those whom the Charity Organization Society now rejects as "unhelpable" are admittedly very deserving; and there is no reason why these should be excluded from the ministrations of the charitable. As a matter of fact, it is just among the so-called "unhelpable" cases that the generous lavishing of love and personal care, which the state cannot bestow, has often achieved its greatest triumphs.

We must therefore reject, once for all, what has been called the "parallel bars" theory of the relationship between voluntary philanthropy and state action. There can be no sharing of cases between them. It is indispensable that the public authority should be and remain responsible for seeing that every case, without exception, receives the necessary and appropriate treatment, that every individual born into the community is given the opportunity to maintain the prescribed "national minimum" of civilized life; and that his obligation to come up to that standard is uniformly and invariably enforced.

Instead of a division of cases, we get, therefore, a division of functions. Under this theory, the voluntary agencies, with their perpetual seeking after new methods of treatment, with their loving care of difficult cases, with their varied religious influences, must be deliberately made use of in the public service to be constantly raising the standard of civilized conduct and physical health above the comparatively low minimum which alone can be enforced by the public authority.

Here we have a conception, not of "parallel bars" wholly separate and distinct from the other, with a large intervening space of "missed cases"; but of an "extension ladder" placed firmly on the foundation of an enforced minimum standard of life, and carrying onward the work of the public authorities to far finer shades of physical, moral, and spiritual perfection.

We may adduce, as an instance of the co-ordination of voluntary agency and state action, upon this, the "extension ladder," theory of their relationship, the widespread organization of poor relief in Germany that we call the Elberfeld system. The local authorities, officially responsible for

providing for the poor, make use of an extensive staff of unpaid and unprofessional volunteer workers, who visit the homes and make themselves acquainted with the circumstances of every family. The voluntary service is nominally obligatory upon all citizens, much as were, in England, the ancient offices of the manor and the parish surviving in the constable and the overseer.

The really distinctive feature of the Elberfeld system and the one to which its excellence is due, however, is not this obligation of service, which is seldom enforced, but the organic relationship in which the voluntary helper stands with regard to the public authority. To the necessitous family he comes as a friend, a neighbor, and a fellow-citizen, concerned to get them over their trouble in the best possible way. But on his other side, the voluntary helper is the agent of the public authority, registering his cases in the official records, reporting what he has seen, carrying out in his ministrations the official instructions which he has received, procuring admission for his families to the several public institutions, dispensing as outdoor relief the funds provided by the local authority out of rates and taxes, and acting throughout under the constant supervision and direction of the expert municipal officials in each department.

He is thus, to our eyes, a combination of the "friend of the street" of the Guild of Help, and the poor law relieving officer; of the member of a children's care committee, and the salaried health visitor sent by the medical officer of health; of the volunteer collector of the country children's holiday fund, and the school attendance officer. He is, in short, not a charitable worker, but a volunteer official!

The great advantages of the Elberfeld system are that, (1) no case escapes notice or is prematurely dropped; (2) there is no restriction of funds or opportunities to those which private philanthropy can afford; and (3) the volunteer, having a very few cases to deal with and being able to take his own time over them, can give any amount of personal care and personal friendship in the discharge of his duties. As a matter of fact, also, he is allowed to use free discretion within certain regulations.

But although the so-called Elberfeld system of German poor relief has this excellence of form, it has the radical defect, as we can now see, of concerning itself only with the relief of the families after destitution has occurred. It does not deal with the more important part of the problem—preventing the occurrence of destitution.

It is, in fact, only with regard to the domiciliary treatment of the destitute that the German Empire has developed any separate poor law administration. Practically all the institutions are unconnected with poor

relief as such, and properly form part of the specialized local administrations dealing with public health, education, lunacy, or the maintenance of the able-bodied unemployed. In these departments of the work, however, we do not need to go to Germany for the best examples of what we have called the "extension ladder" relationship between state action and voluntary agencies.

In most of the cities of England we see developing, in all branches of really preventive work, a most promising system of co-operation between the several municipal departments and appropriately specialized volunteers. Working under the local health authority, in strict co-ordination with the efforts of the health committee of the city council, and actually under the direction of the medical officer of health, we have growing staffs of volunteer health visitors, the rapidly multiplying "schools for mothers," philanthropic sanatoria and convalescent homes, even here and there a voluntary hospital, all dependent on private zeal and charitable benevolence for personal service and funds. Working under the supervision and direction of the education committee of the city council and its chief officers, we have all the varieties of children's care committees or school canteen committees, country holiday fund committees, and "spectacle committees," the play centers and the vacation schools, and here and there even a privately subsidized dental clinic or general school clinic, all illustrating the initiative, inventiveness, and the devoted personal zeal of the voluntary and philanthropic institution.

Working in connection with the asylums committee of the city council, we have already a few "after-care" committees and various philanthropic institutions. Here and there the old age pension committees of the city councils, new as they are, have already begun to develop a system of voluntary pension visitors, and to look out for donors of almshouses in which to lodge the most deserving and the most helpless of their pensioners. The government labour exchanges, with their scheme of unemployment insurance, which have been started only two years, have already advisory committees, after-care committees, and juvenile labour committees, and may find themselves presently in organic connection with a series of labour colonies, managed by the devoted zeal of the great religious denominations.

It is already clear that the English city councils will call for, and will obtain in their work of collective provision for the non-effectives, the help of a multitude of voluntary workers and the co-operation of a whole series of voluntary institutions.

We suggest that this "extension ladder" theory of the relationship be-

tween state action and voluntary agencies, and the organic connection which it establishes between the specialized municipal departments and the similarly specialized voluntary workers and philanthropic institutions, affords, for the first time, a most promising basis for that real organization of charity, which is so badly required. However it may be in New York or Chicago, in London voluntary philanthropy is not systematic or coordinated.

After nearly half a century of incessant and devoted efforts, the London Charity Organization Society has, everywhere and completely, failed in any sense to "organize" even the corporate charitable agencies. The explanation seems to us clear. The theory on which they have been working—the attempt to segregate the beneficiaries into two absolutely distinct camps, so that the public authority alone deals with one set of poor people, and the voluntary agencies alone with quite another set—virtually excludes the public authority from the work of charity organizations, whereas it is the public authority alone that can accomplish it. No one charitable agency will be allowed by the others to control them. The Charity Organization Society is a charitable agency like any other; and every corporate charitable agency, feeling itself in rivalry with the rest, is intensely jealous of every other one. But once it is accepted that the public authority and the voluntary agencies have both to deal with the same persons, and to undertake distinct functions with regard to these persons, there is not the same rivalry between the two organizations. Moreover, all charitable agencies are, so to speak, on the same plane. One charitable agency can seldom do anything to complete and supplement the work of another charitable agency, because both alike suffer from the defects of their qualities—they cannot give continuous treatment, and they cannot exercise disciplinary powers.

In the public authority, the voluntary agency discovers a partner who is willing to remain in the background, but who has the necessary resources and the necessary powers to make good the position of the voluntary agency as regards its effect on the character of the persons whom it treats. The farm colony or the voluntary hospital, the orphanage or the play center, however excellent may be the treatment which it affords, can do nothing to prevent the "abuse" of its hospitality; it cannot make conditions or exercise supervision as to the conduct of the person before and after treatment, though this may be essential to its success.

The unlimited free medical treatment afforded by the voluntary hospitals is so unconnected with any disciplinary supervision over the person who takes advantage of it, that it frequently acts as a subsidy to unhygi-



enic if not to immoral living. Moreover, patients have to be turned out with the practical certainty that there is no place to which they can go to be saved from dropping back into the disease from which they have recently emerged. The farm colony is hampered by having no such outlet for the good man as a universal exchange and government responsibility for finding either work or training would afford; and at the same time it can inspire no fear of relegation to a reformatory detention colony in the man who is hopelessly recalcitrant.

We shall never get the full advantage of all the brilliant invention and devoted zeal and work existing among our volunteers and our voluntary institutions until we can place them on the sure foundation of public responsibility for the maintenance and enforcement of a minimum standard of life. When we have once secured this solid foundation, our voluntary agencies will become what they ought essentially to be—on the one hand the eyes and face and fingers by which the stiffly moving machinery of collective action can be brought most effectively to bear upon particular cases discovered by or remitted to them; and on the other—pioneer endeavors to raise ever higher and higher the standard of what human conduct can be made to be; by showing, in this direction and in that, how and where it is possible actually to raise the “national minimum.” In this way will be pushed ever upward the conception of the order, the freedom, and the beauty that it is possible to secure to and for every individual in the community.

## DOCUMENT 3-B

### EXCERPTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE JEWISH COMMITTEE FOR PERSONAL SERVICE IN STATE INSTITUTIONS (CALIFORNIA)

#### SECOND ANNUAL REPORT (1922-23)

There are hundreds of women and girls (Jewish and non-Jewish) in state hospitals who should be returned to the community, where they could be self-supporting, if a stepping-stone were provided for them in the form of a boarding home. As a solution to the problem, both your Honorary and Executive secretaries have been engaged for the past several months in negotiating with various persons and organizations looking toward the creation of a permanent after-care home for women and girls returned from hospitals, a home which is to be nonsectarian and partially self-supporting.

#### FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT (1924-25)

We found by our contact with the physicians at the state hospitals a number of non-Jewish women patients who could endure an extra-mural existence, but who could not be paroled because of the lack of interest in them on the outside, . . . and for want of relatives, direct or collateral. Our observations in this respect have resulted in the calling of a special session at this year's California Conference of Social Work, to consider a state-wide parole system for improved mental cases and the need of co-operation from outside agencies in this respect. We hope for constructive results. Mr. W. D. Wagner, director of State Institutions, has given us his whole-hearted support. We are assured of an expression of viewpoint from a number of the medical superintendents of the state hospitals; also from California's most prominent psychiatrists and psychologists.

You will be interested to know of the steps we took toward assisting the Board of Prison Directors in the recent move to establish new quarters for women to relieve the present socially destructive congestion. Little did the people of the state realize that a "home" to accommodate twenty-five normally was occupied by over fifty—an assemblage of all types, with little or no means for the exercise of the body or mind, without sufficient sanitary provision and without equipment for the women's employment

or instruction in gainful occupations that should serve as the basis for their re-establishment in society. At the suggestion of Mr. George Van Smith, president of the Board of Prison Directors, we passed resolutions supporting the principle involved in the establishment of such a home, leaving it entirely to the Board to determine its location and policy. Our resolutions were distributed throughout the state by being sent to our committees in eighteen sustaining and co-operating communities, signed and remitted to the representatives of these localities in the California legislature.

We think that this year the "Fireside," or After-Care Convalescent Home for Women, is one step nearer realization. The Budget Committee of the Community Chest of San Francisco has had to defer action on the application for an allotment of \$11,000 until the entire amount needed for the chest this year has been collected. We have been informed that, should this sum be procured through the committee now working to collect it, "Fireside" will be one of the new agencies to be included in the chest. As has been reported before, this new agency will be a great aid in our work in the parole of the mentally improved and mentally deficient. It will bridge the gap between institutional existence and life away from it. The immediate change from life free from institutional discipline and regulation often proves too much for the mentally afflicted, and here we have a material approach to the solution of this problem.

In the last Annual Report, you were apprised of the movement in San Francisco to determine the need for some kind of bureau to solve employment difficulties. The matter was referred to the Council of Social and Health Agencies of the San Francisco Community Chest, a survey was made and a report submitted which indicated that, so far as the community was concerned, the trouble lay in the fact that there was not a sufficient number of jobs to supply the demand for them; further, that there were ample existing agencies, public and private, to take care of the problem and hence no need for an additional bureau.

However, during the past year a conference of executives came into being in San Francisco, consisting of the executives of the various Jewish agencies, with the president of the Federation of Jewish Charities of San Francisco as chairman. In February of this year the conference considered the question of employment and a committee, of which your executive secretary was a member, was appointed to bring in recommendations which would be placed before the Federation Board for consideration. The

consensus of opinion in this committee was that to form a Jewish employment bureau was not feasible, but a recommendation was made to establish an adjustment and placement bureau operated by and under the sole control of the Federation, rather than to develop an independent agency.

It is estimated that 30 per cent of the applications for employment to the agencies require special attention, advisement, and placement. It is this group that will require the attention of the proposed bureau, the remaining 70 per cent being made up of cases that will be referred to the existing agencies. The recommendations of this committee were placed before the Board of the Federation, and by it referred to its Committee on Internal Relations. The mode of financing the proposed agency would be, even for an experimental period, by an agreement among the agencies, including our own, to contribute a sum in proportion to their size and the probable value of the service.

#### SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT (1927-28)

You will be interested to know that the efforts we expended some years ago in assisting the Board of Prison Directors to establish new quarters for women have been successful. During the year the new women's prison, situated at San Quentin, has been opened for occupancy, and it is needless to say that it is a great improvement. Where before, the women were crowded in a building without sufficient sanitary provision, with little or no means for the exercise of body or mind, they now have separate rooms, a well-ventilated building, and beautiful grounds to use for solace and exercise. However, there yet remains a definite work to accomplish, and that is the training and instructing of these women in gainful occupations so that their time in prison would be beneficial and they could, upon leaving the prison, be better equipped to re-establish themselves in society.

During the past few years our committee has been active in the rehabilitation of the mental convalescent from state hospitals. As part of our educational program we have, at special meetings held in conjunction with the yearly California Conference of Social Work, attempted to show the need in this state of a comprehensive mental hygiene program to include preventive, educational, and rehabilitation work. Our experience and the work in eastern hospitals has shown us the need for social service departments in the state hospitals for the mentally sick and of out-patient departments as extensions of the hospitals.

As a culmination to our special session held at the California Confer-

ence of Social Work in Oakland, Calif., the Conference decided to take the initiative in presenting to the proper state authorities a plan for the state. After working in co-operation with groups of social workers and mental hygiene experts, a plan for a survey of the needs of the state was approved by the Board of Directors of the Conference and presented to the governor. The governor, after receipt of the plan, requested that the special committee appointed by the Conference confer with directors of the various state departments to go over the plan in detail.

On March 24, 1928, this special committee met with Governor Young, Mr. Earl E. Jensen, director of institutions, and Mrs. Anna L. Saylor, director of the Department of Social Welfare. There were also in attendance by special invitation mental hygiene experts from throughout the state, and representatives of our committee. There were a number of papers presented on different aspects of mental hygiene, and the entire program was summed up by Dr. George L. Wallace, sent from the East by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. Much interest in the subject was manifested by those present and the outcome of the meeting resolved itself into a resolution to the effect that the chairman of the Conference, Father Lucey, appoint three members to confer with the governor and Mr. A. R. Heron, chairman of the Board of Control, to determine whether it is feasible to procure the money for the survey before the next legislature from some available fund. If this is not feasible, we feel the governor will do all he can to see that the next legislature appropriates the money.

In other words, what I have hinted at is that the whole scope of the committee be broadened; that, in addition to functioning as a palliative factor in the institution itself, it also undertake a greater if more difficult task of acting as an educational force in this state that has taken the lead in dealing with problems of delinquency. We shall then aid our wards in the hospitals and prisons much more than we are doing now, and put ourselves in a position to better assist those Jewish agencies in other states who have noticed the work of our committee and are seeking to create similar bodies in their own jurisdictions. Let us not continue our present policy of aping the mythological characters who sought to carry water in a sieve. The logical method should be to attack the problem at the source and not at the outlet.

## DOCUMENT 3-C

### METHODS IN REORGANIZING PRIVATE SOCIAL WORK<sup>6</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION

Any discussion today of private social work as it may exist in the future must be focused against a background of public welfare administration. While there exist both extreme conservatives and extreme radicals who may disagree as to whether the best interests of the country will be served by having the preponderant volume of welfare service performed by the government, their number is negligible. Most thoughtful people welcome the growing responsibility of government because it typifies an enlarged consideration for human beings, a security for the continuity of needed services, and a broader basis on which those services can be rendered. On the other hand, we cannot be overly optimistic, and we certainly do not want to be under any misimpression, concerning present trends. While the partnership between federal, state, and local government has given rise to a gigantic public welfare program, it is one which is largely confined to activity in the relief field. Deduct the tremendous relief services now under public control and the net result would show a public welfare responsibility less than the total of five years ago. Almost everywhere provision for nursing service, mothers' pensions, recreational activities, child care, and health education has been diminished. Curtailed budgets, limitation of staff, and actual discontinuance of organized work are real or fancied necessities caused by lowering tax receipts. Though we may be headed into the era of public welfare administration, we cannot plan future reorganizing of private social work with the idea that we have already arrived.

I do not believe that any hard and fast principles can be laid down as to the future of private work. Different policies will have to be followed in different places. Those who believe there are distinctive levels of social work which are clearly defined and which can be handed out as a principle of procedure, one to public agencies and one to private agencies, are probably doomed to disappointment. Others who feel they want to guide the public and private fields along the line of case classification, such as maintaining the more complicated case work problems in the hands of private

<sup>6</sup> An address to the Illinois Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers, by Pierce Atwater, the director of the Community Chest of St. Paul, August 3, 1934.

agencies, may be perfectly sound in theory, but the actual functioning along these lines will have to be conditioned by many elements too numerous to mention in this introductory statement. Suffice it to say we cannot be too certain of exact functional differentiations between these two groups.

I want to stress a few broad principles on which there is a fair degree of certainty. In my mind about five of these exist which I want to take up in some detail.

#### WORK TOWARD LOWER COST SERVICES

It seems to me we can be reasonably certain that there is apt to be less money in the future for private social work. Last year, for example, the St. Paul Community Chest raised about \$790,000 in order to meet the deficits of the agencies it supports. Roughly speaking, 183 firms and individuals gave \$411,000 of the amount raised, another 1,200 firms and individuals gave \$137,000 and about 59,000 people gave \$242,000. It is interesting to observe that 2.3% of the givers contributed 70% of the money, and conversely 98.7% of the contributors provided about 30% of the total. The rich people of St. Paul may display a little more generosity than in some places, but when private gifts to welfare work are carefully analyzed, the St. Paul results are fairly common. There have been unsavory exceptions as typified by some of the emergency relief funds which have been raised where business groups and individuals agreed to give fifty-fifty with the gifts of employees, which practice I am sure most of us do not condone.

I just do not see large gifts continuing on the same level. Whether or not we are gaining headway on the theory of smaller profits, higher salaries, and shorter hours, may be a debatable question at this moment, but I hope it will be a reality in the future. This can only mean smaller funds for private social work. Therefore it must plan now to clean its own house by every sound method.

*Private hospitals.*—A great deal of private money goes into general hospitals. As a result of lowering return from contributions and lowering income from services rendered, many private hospitals are in a serious financial predicament. Reliance entirely on contributions and earned income is going to prove bad for the hospitals and unusually bad for other social services. If there is no change in policy these hospitals, which have great strength, will go out and get a reasonable proportion of money from private sources and eventually it will be done at the cost of other needed social work.

My experience with the group payment hospital plan leads me to believe that the leadership of private social work should vigorously back this movement, which enables the citizenship to help itself. We have such a group in St. Paul composed of employees of social agencies. We pay \$9.50 per year which insures us twenty-one days' hospital care. Several of our professional group have benefited by this membership and the rest of us were glad that the victims did not have to worry about the bill or borrow money from us to pay. While I cannot discuss the question of compulsory health insurance, I can cite it as another means by which we can maintain our hospitals and diminish the amount of deficit which has to be met through private contributions.

I would regard hospitals as institutions which should be removed as rapidly as possible as competitors for funds from private sources. The social planning leadership of private work and of public work, too, should recognize the principle that private hospitals must develop ways and means to finance themselves out of income, out of payments by voluntary associations of citizens who wish to group themselves for the underwriting of hospital service, and finally out of some compulsory insurance scheme which may make further worry about how to provide hospital care to normally self-supporting people a thing of the past.

*Relief operations.*—It seems almost axiomatic that private social work should not bear any substantial portion of the outdoor relief burden. Federal, state, and local governments have been committed to that responsibility in the past two years. They are not going to unload what they have already accepted if leadership which social work can muster is able to prevent it. Certainly the raising of large private funds for outdoor relief operations is not going to help the principle of government responsibility.

I look forward to the day when private family agencies can operate more or less on a nonrelief basis. The exact method of operation must vary in different places. Irrespective of favorable legislation that may be passed in the next legislative sessions of the several states, we still are going to have much inflexibility in statutes and too much supplemental relief will have to be given from private sources. Even so, we should all move in one direction and that should be toward a negligible outdoor relief item in private family agency budgets.

Personally, I feel social case work must prove itself as a treatment divorced from relief. I think it should be made available to other than dependent persons and families, and will be accepted by them as a skilful aid in the all too numerous family problems which everywhere prevail. It seems to me far better if future family work under private auspices can be



built around some kind of clinic of domestic relations, serving the various economic groups, and be only incidentally associated in its work with the field of dependency.

#### TRANSFER OF CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS TO PUBLIC AUSPICES

In St. Paul we recently gave to the county government a quarter-million dollar institution which had been developed for about twenty-five years and for which people, as Patrick Henry said, had almost sacrificed their lives and their honor. The institution happened to be known as the Children's Preventorium and gave care in a splendid plant to about eighty-five youngsters with childhood tuberculosis. It drew about \$50,000 a year from private sources and by the transfer of the property we were able to cut the operating deficit from local funds by about \$18,000. This amount was available in state aid, as soon as it became a publicly controlled hospital under the Minnesota Sanatorium Law. This, it seems to me, is typical of the kinds of work now supported by private funds which properly should be in public hands. As soon as individual groups are not afraid to give away \$100,000 or \$300,000 or \$500,000, we can begin to make some headway. I would raise the question if any loss is ever suffered by placing a private charitable institution under public control. The organization does not give away anything other than a personal trust.

*Institutions in general.*—I would even go so far as to believe that but few institutions ought to be under the control of private philanthropy. The one exception I would make are homes for the aged. This field is an exception because such homes can be so organized as eventually to become almost self-supporting, and certainly they can provide a well-run and satisfactory place of abode for aged individuals or couples who have insufficient funds to live individually but who have ample funds to insure life care in a very good private institution. I do not mean to suggest this in lieu of old age pension support because, in spite of present limitations of most pension laws, the two procedures could properly go hand in hand.

But in the future plan of private work I see no real place for maternity hospitals or new orphanages for children or even institutions for recreational purposes such as new buildings for Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A. Undoubtedly a settlement program cannot be operated without an institution.

Brick and mortar consume both too much capital and too much maintenance. Private work can never be flexible, and what we want it to be, if it has heavy invested interests. I have never been successful in convincing the young men and women's associations that they might be far better

off with noninstitutional programs but sooner or later I feel they will be forced to accept this conclusion. If one can still sell a Y.M.C.A. as a second-class hotel and realize even a small portion of book value, it is better than to let the matter drift until the banker finally forecloses the mortgage.

Perhaps I have said enough to give an indication of what I mean by suggesting that private social work move toward operations which do not develop heavy deficits. Much of future operation may be very expensive, unit by unit, but it may be with a very limited clientele. My strong feeling is to keep away from digging private agencies into entrenched positions. I would conclude my first point by urging that future private social work aim toward services which require a minimum of deficit from private contributions, which may have a reasonable degree of earning power and which may be operated for the benefit of cross-sections of the whole citizenship rather than exclusively for the dependent group.)

#### WORK TOWARD COMMUNITY VIEWPOINT FOR ALL GROUPS

Private social work has attained a substantial footing in the past by building around specialized groups, religious, racial, or neighborhood. Also there have been special interest groups. This practice of establishing work under the sponsorship of particular units has been a weakness as well as a strength. With the increasing interdependence of all people on each other, the weaker elements are becoming more dominant than the stronger. It strikes me as possible that private work may do away with the weakness and conserve the strength of this traditional development. It may succeed in doing this by featuring group interest under some common organization.

Social work in the family field is frequently complicated by a multiplicity of agencies representing the nonsectarian and, in addition, agencies representing Jewish, Catholic, Lutheran, and ex-soldier groups. Long strides have been taken already toward achieving co-operation, but I am about convinced that co-operation is not enough, and consolidation for operating purposes, in which group interest is conserved but sublimated to the general aim and purpose, can be effected with value to all concerned.

In the fall of 1931 I was approached by a strong group of Lutheran ministers and citizens who insisted that in the forthcoming campaign to raise funds a Lutheran emergency relief agency be set up. They had plenty of precedent in St. Paul, since there were well-established relief agencies in the Catholic, Jewish, and ex-soldier fields. Instead of yielding to this request, we made a counterproposal which was accepted. We set up an Advisory Committee on Lutheran cases within the organization of the United

Charities. A high grade, competent, and experienced case worker of Lutheran background was employed. She was given the status of district secretary, and in addition to her organizational activities in work with the Lutheran group, she served as a case consultant on all Lutheran families in whom it was felt the church might have a real and constructive interest. I wish I had time to describe the three years' operation of this unit but I will merely describe the outcome. The work is still going and the Lutheran group is convinced that the greatest usefulness of the church can be exercised on relief cases if some non-sectarian agency administers the relief. Then the influence of the church can be brought to bear as an added factor in connection with the case work. Actually there seems to result a higher level of good will between the church and the dependent Lutheran families than would be true if the Lutheran group had to carry the burden of deciding when to grant relief. While I believe the Lutheran group frankly admits this conclusion, I am quite certain the Catholic group would not so agree.

This experiment with the Lutherans has led us to serious consideration of a consolidation for operating purposes of the United Charities, the Bureau of Catholic Charities, the Jewish Welfare Association, the American Legion Welfare Bureau, and the Lutheran Advisory Committee. The Jewish group is extremely reluctant; there is a difference of opinion within the Catholic group; the ex-soldier people do not want it; and the Lutherans are completely ready to try it. On the whole the Jewish group might in the end be persuaded, providing we can arrange to maintain a centralized approach to Jewish families, which, because of the small Jewish relief load in St. Paul, might be a desirable procedure. At this time such assurance cannot be given. When and if it can, the Jewish group might be won over. Ultimately, agreement by the Bureau of Catholic Charities would depend upon the diocesan point of view. It happens that in our diocese the experiment might not be impossible, provided the road were left open to return if it did not prove successful.

While some funds might be saved in such a plan of operation, this argument is not being used. We are thinking in terms of a general secretary responsible for administration, with a district supervisory plan as a part of the direct line of operation. Serving the special groups would be several associate secretaries who would act as case consultants. One of these associates would represent the interests of the Catholic unit, and others the Lutheran group, the Jewish people, etc. District workers would be professional people of the several religious denominations. When a Jewish case appeared where complications were involved, it would be sent for review

to the Jewish consultant and might conceivably be placed in the hands of some Jewish worker in the district who was also handling non-Jewish cases. This same policy would prevail with all the other interests.

We would propose to free the associate secretaries from much of the administrative responsibility so as to give them ample time to do a community organization job with their respective groups. Part of this job would be the maintenance of several advisory committees. For example, the Catholic Advisory Committee would know that the entire load was open to its review and consideration. Instead of bothering it with all Catholic cases, the worker would refer only those where the record indicated the church might have some real involvement and where it might render useful counsel.

These associates would be responsible also for maintenance of relations with the public relief agencies and would render advice and assistance to them on problem cases where their advice, and even case work service, might be of special help.

The aim of this plan would be to use the special groups in matters where they could be of the greatest help and not clutter up their deliberations with cases in which any professional could do as good work as another regardless of racial or religious status. In other words, we would hope to conserve the strengths that the racial and religious and other special groups have to offer and to get away from the weakness involved in having a racial or religious interest dominant.

#### WORK FOR BETTER LEADERSHIP AND HIGHER STANDARDS

Some people have felt the entire future position, or even the continuance of private social work, is a debatable issue. Given a basis for financing the operation, I personally do not see anything debatable about it.

The predominant leadership in the public welfare field today is one which has come out of private work. I should hope to see a continued usefulness for the private agencies in the development of leaders.

For many years, at least, we cannot make sound headway if all of the leaders in the profession are serving as public officials burdened with the overwhelming weight of public administration. We must have people who have time to think. We must have people whose administrative duties are not complicated by reason of their being the servants of the general public, including politicians, businessmen, unemployed councils, chronic complainants, and self-appointed reformers. I have had a little personal experience myself in connection with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. I feel confident that I could do much better work in any federal ad-

ministrative job if some 500 Congressmen and 96 Senators did not exist on Capitol Hill.

Besides, we need an excellent leadership for private social work if it is going to carry on what must be a continuous job in the field of experimentation. In using the term "leadership" I do not mean executives only but more especially skilled practitioners. I would like to maintain private social work if for no other reason than to give this more detached experience to many of the profession.

I think the theory is well-established that citizens have very little influence on anything unless they participate in it. Influence is the direct result of participation. If there is to be any instrumentality beyond public welfare administration which can be used in the production of good leaders and in the establishment of higher standards, that mechanism must be private social work. I think we all want this function fulfilled and I would rather like to see a holiday declared on the debatability of the question: Is there any place for private social work?

Another argument which is convincing still exists. The era of public welfare administration has not yet entirely arrived. We cannot forget the importance of private programs supplemental to the public service. In a way I wish we could forget private supplementation, but we are perforce guided by realities, and in the interest of rounded development we shall not be able to ignore this aspect of private social work for many years to come.

#### WORK FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF WISE AND VIGOROUS CITIZENSHIP PARTICIPATION

I regard one of the major duties of private social work to be that of building and strengthening the public service. Every government service is always in danger of becoming far removed from citizenship participation. Such has been the history of the old public welfare boards in local communities. Such, too, is the history of county poor farms. The only thing which has saved the health services is the interest of the medical profession and it would have been saved a lot better if that citizenship interest were on a wider basis.

I think a real duty of private social work is to see that in every local public welfare set-up, provision is made for enlisting the service of outstanding citizens from various walks of life. When I say local units I do not mean to exempt state or federal public welfare administrations, but I am not going to take time to deal with ways and means on the higher levels of the public service. To be specific I am going to give you the plan of district organization recently set up in St. Paul in connection with our

emergency relief administration. (The following is the detailed proposal upon which the plan for district advisory committees was based.)

SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION FOR DISTRICT COMMITTEES

- I. That a special committee from the Advisory Committee on Relief Problems be appointed to develop districts, one for the local homeless men and one for the local unattached women.
- II. That first of all, a chairman for each committee be appointed. In this connection as many persons as possible should be used from the Advisory Committee on Relief Problems. (See No. X for authority.)
- III. That the Chairmen of the nine committees meet together as frequently as necessary.
- IV. That a good organizer, familiar with the field of social work and the community life of St. Paul, be employed to develop the personnel of these nine committees; to take charge of the programs, attend meetings, maintain minutes, and act as secretary of all committees working under the jurisdiction of the Advisory Committee on Relief Problems and the immediate supervision of the secretary, whose administrative responsibilities would be shared closely with Dr. Lundquist, Mr. Heckman, and his district secretaries.
- V. The responsibility for organization and procedure should be taken off the shoulders of the district secretaries because of the onerous nature of their present duties. It must be remembered, however, that the district committee is a definite part of each district, and on all important decisions the organization person employed shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the district secretary and must talk over all important matters with that officer.
- VI. If the organization is established as provided in Paragraph IV, then the appointment of the organization person should be made by the secretary, subject to the approval of the Advisory Committee. It is probable someone might be employed to take this position rendering what amounts to a full-time service for part-time pay. After proper Board action, the salary could probably be paid by the Board of Public Welfare, the Community Chest, or the United Charities.

These district committees are not to be typical case conferences but rather are to be advisory committees to the district. They can discuss all matters, but their attention is directed particularly to matters which the executives of the Board of Public Welfare and the district secretary have to present. The following outline is given

as a specific operating method subject to later revision in the light of experience.

A. Methods of informing the staff of public opinion.

1. Raising such questions in the committee as: Do you find evidence that the public thinks people are getting relief who should not?
2. Do you find evidence that relief is not meeting the situation in many families?
3. Do you find evidence that children are coming to school improperly clothed?
4. Do you find evidence that urgent problems are not met?
5. Do you hear favorable or adverse comments on our workers?
6. Do you hear that our procedures are tangled with "red tape"?

B. Methods of informing the public, through the committee, of policies and procedures.

1. Explain to committee the amount of relief grants and let them ask questions.
2. Explain deviation from maximum allowances and the reasons therefor.
3. Explain the collateral investigations, such as all employment records, relatives, etc.
4. Discuss with the committee the amount of service the staff can render to relief cases and the reasons therefor.
5. After going over similar data encourage committee members:
  - a) To correct misimpressions in connection with their own daily contact with individuals and groups.
  - b) To make informal explanation of policies at social gatherings, i.e., at churches and other community meetings where people just meet and talk.
  - c) To secure formal appearances of relief officials or committee members in the explaining of policies.
6. Use the committee as a "sounding board" to test out new relief policies or the abandonment of certain practices.
  - a) How far is it wise to go in the district in the transfer of unattached individuals from treatment as families to the division dealing with homeless men and women?

- b) What can be done to encourage families to make a better utilization of food allowance?
- 7. Utilize the committee as a consulting group on problem cases in which neighbors become aroused because too much or too little is being done for a certain family.
  - a) Bring facts to committee.
  - b) Ask opinion.
  - c) If necessary, have from one to three leaders of the delegation protesting about treatment sit in with the committee and present their opinions.
  - d) Use committee as a last recourse, presenting to it only problem cases on which the district secretary and staff feel they need further help.
- 8. Use the committee in connection with self-appointed groups who try to change relief administration.
  - a) As a matter of last recourse when district needs further help, a representative or representatives, not over three, of some group might present their "demands" or "recommendations" to the committee.
  - b) Experience indicates that when any group is given a fair hearing before a substantial body of their fellow-citizens, they are apt to be more careful than when they are appearing before an employed official.
  - c) If this seems a wise procedure, some of these complaint meetings might be handled by subcommittees.
- 9. Use the committee in obtaining volunteers.
  - a) There might be someone appointed to assist in securing motor transportation for visitors and in taking children and families to clinics.
  - b) Some of the committee members themselves might assist in the offices, do clerical work, or perform "friendly" visits under the direction of the case worker.
- 10. Use the committee in assisting on special relief items.
  - a) In connection with special family needs, such as in the case of the precocious high-school girl who needs special clothing to meet her individual craving for proper status in her group, one or more committee members might be of great assistance.



## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

- b) The expenditures of funds raised for relief by churches, lodges, and other community groups might be directed into more constructive channels through the influence of committee members.
11. Use the committee in finding employment opportunities. (It is useless to expect that the committee can do anything on wholesale employment opportunity, but it could help in isolated cases that need special attention.)
- a) A high grade salaried person who has become totally discouraged might be given an employment opportunity by special effort of the committee and thus perhaps be saved from complete disaster.
  - b) Boys and girls who have finished their education and who have unusual attainments might be given special attention and work opportunities might be provided for them.
  - c) Handicapped people, such as those who are deaf or crippled or have deficient vision, might be given special attention.
12. Urge the committee to foster a sane and constructive interpretation as to the social needs of the unemployed group.
- a) Letting people know the correct statistics about the members involved—number of children, etc.
  - b) Contradicting equally baseless charges that "relief is starving the unemployed group."
  - c) In general, providing a wider and more personal dissemination of the real facts. Obviously, some time would have to be consumed in explaining to the committee what these real facts are.
13. Use the committee in investigations.
- a) The committee should understand that the investigatory procedure is in the hands of the professional staff but that upon occasion committee members can be of assistance.
  - b) They can help in instances where clients seem to be hiding possible resources.
  - c) Case workers might feel some member was especially qualified to talk with one of her cases and would be in a position to get at the facts. Example: Use of a minister or a school principal in this connection.

NOTE: In using committee members in any connection in an investigation, it should be borne in mind that their use is in assisting the case worker; that they take no independent action; and that they have no access to case records.

- VII. The general purpose of these groups should be to bring forward a clientele of interested citizens from the district itself so as to give a feeling of citizenship participation in the whole matter of relief.
- VIII. With the Chairman appointed, the Chairman and the organization person should then proceed to bring up these committees to a number that seems satisfactory for the locality. Generally speaking, district committees might number as many as twenty to thirty persons. Special groups, such as local homeless and unattached women and men, should have a committee of people especially interested and qualified. Such committees might well be smaller in size than those serving a district. With the exception of the latter two committees, all persons appointed should be residents of the district.
- IX. Appointments should be proposed by the district committee chairman after approval by the district secretary. Ultimate authority on this matter should rest with the Advisory Committee on Relief Problems, or its appointed representative, or representatives.
- X. The last three named individuals, together with district committee chairmen, might constitute the Executive Committee to settle such matters for all committees as:
  - a) Their continuance or discontinuance.
  - b) Problems of committee personnel.
  - c) Decisions as to what work is a proper or improper field.
  - d) Other matters of policy.

Here St. Paul finds itself in the field of experimentation. We have no idea whether this system will prove successful. I think numerous experiments must be tried, and then eventually it will be wise to set up some legal machinery whereby the best of these experiments can be put into official practice.

#### WORK IN CONNECTION WITH THE PLANNING JOB

I suppose that I have been so close to the work of councils of social agencies for the last fifteen years that I see too closely their imperfections. I feel some radical reorganizations must be made, organically speaking. I am not at all satisfied with the relationship between public and private agencies as they function through the council. The councils, since they

are organized so often in connection with chests, give the private agencies an important and added relation with the central body which the public agencies do not enjoy. I have a few ideas on how this might be corrected, but I am trying to deal mainly with the way broad objectives should be carried out, and I do not believe the exact form of organization is pertinent.

The important point in connection with this subject is that private resources have an important contribution to make. It seems to me planning is too broad a function to be left entirely to public officials on whom rests so heavily the burden of administration and who stand so prominently in the heat of public controversy. I believe private facilities should, for some time, continue to take the initiative to provide planning machinery in which there is the broadest opportunity for both public and private participation. We need to develop new techniques in planning in the form of machinery to exploit fact-finding and research as a basis for intelligent progress. Some of the planning machinery may not be in councils but will have to be developed when time, money, and opportunity prevail. In other words, if there should be a local foundation I would have no hesitation in turning over to it important functions in the planning field. If some public department is prepared to render good service for the community at large, as well as merely getting at the facts concerning its own operations, it would seem appropriate to let it go ahead. The same thing might be said of any private agency.

But these expressions only slightly condition the objective that private resources can still function with profit in the general program of local community planning. The responsibility of councils for social planning does not and should not mean that they intend to pre-empt the field but that they will encourage participation of all.

#### PRIVATE FINANCING

This discussion of the future of private social work would not be complete without a word concerning future financing. There are those who argue that chests have seen their best days. What is really meant is that chests have probably seen the days of their largest funds and most extensive influence and I do not know many who will bemoan this eventuality. Thoughtful people in and out of the chest field have properly regarded chests as a sort of bridge to the next type of financial operation.

Even though many bad methods are involved in chest financing, it is a little difficult to vision what is going to take its place. Certainly, to go back to miscellaneous campaigns of many groups is not going to help us. I seriously doubt if it helps Chicago. I almost believe your continuance of

this system is one of the biggest obstacles to progress. I rather admire your reluctance to accept the unsatisfactory features of chest administration. On the other hand, standing still never makes one move forward. While your makeshift in the way of a central fund to help to meet deficits over and above the amount which can be raised by individual agencies is not perhaps standing still, it is questionable to me whether it is a step forward or just a slight stumble in the right direction.

In the financial field we are apt to confuse issues just as we do in any other organization matter. We think in terms of one technique of money-raising as contrasted with another, and we lose sight of the end we are trying to gain. With some reluctance I would suggest a few broad objectives that we might think about in our private financing which eventually might change the picture.

First, I believe we do not want so broad a base for a financial campaign for private work as to make participation so general as to be almost the equivalent of taxation. This practice limits greatly the opportunity for experimental service and independent action. Furthermore, as I have already indicated, the amount of money given by 98 per cent of the givers is not very substantial, so the narrowing of the giving public may not be so impractical from the viewpoint of returns.

Second, I believe we would like to get away from the heated conflict of the traditional community chest campaign, the technique of which has been modified only slightly since the old days of the war chest, except that we have discovered many devices to make it even more heated and more unpopular to evade the solicitor.

Third, we cannot better the procedure of money-raising until we put into practice some of the other points I have mentioned which would tend to reduce the amount of money needed. Social work agencies and leaders who insist on getting for their agencies all the traffic will bear cannot be too critical of the money-raising machine if it employs methods which are not thoroughly civilized. Generally speaking, you have to use heroic methods to do heroic jobs. Give the money-raiser less to raise and he will be infinitely more polite and more refined in his methods.

Fourth, to invoke the greatest degree of success in any new plan, I think we must fall back on the special interest basis. No chest has ever been successful in promoting designations on any real basis. When you have to choose between 50 or 100 or 200 agencies, the practice becomes ridiculous. What we need to develop as a money-raising method is a simple approach to the designation problem. People cannot understand distinctions among a large number of agencies (and it must be admitted few professionals

can understand them either), but all persons can understand the meaning of the work typified by five or six major fields. They might even learn to appreciate ten distinct fields. The trouble in putting this into practice is that agency consciousness at the moment will not permit it. Furthermore, it is impossible to put this suggestion into practice until there is some organic consolidation. I am not arguing for the reduction of private agencies to ten in number in all cities. I am, however, proposing that there is no excuse for trying to interpret ten different family societies and seventeen institutions for aged care. Nor am I suggesting either that we fool the public by listing together all the institutions for the aged and all the recreational societies. As I stated before, I am proposing some common organic relationship among the various groups by means of which we can maintain group interest but get away from agency-mindedness. Nothing much can be done to change our campaigns until some of these things are brought about.

Finally, I believe we would all like to see money-raising developed as a year-round function. Contrary to some, I believe good things have developed through the campaign organization of citizens. I do not know of any city that has been any the worse by reason of having a chest and I know of many that have been positively helped. Therefore, I am not afraid of the campaign as a community institution. I am sure, however, that private social work would be better understood if money-raising could be executed in a more leisurely way.

Such are my rough conclusions on money-raising and you will see, I believe, it is a matter which must follow reorganization of private social work rather than precede it.

## DOCUMENT 3-D

### IMPROVING SOCIAL CONDITIONS<sup>7</sup>

#### CRIMINAL COURTS COMMITTEE

Just as the depression has dramatized poverty and placed the ordinary day-by-day work of the Society in the care of families under the spotlight of publicity, so similarly has the constructive and preventive work which the Society has quietly been doing day-by-day for the past 22 years—to bring about a better administration of the criminal courts and to secure a nearer approximation to justice for those in the community who are often denied justice—been equally put under the spotlight of publicity, not by the depression but by the inquiry into the magistrates courts carried on by Judge Seabury.

Public attention has naturally been concentrated on the dramatic, sometimes sensational, pictures of conditions in the courts that have been brought to light by that investigation. But the public has little knowledge of the quiet, effective work that is done in the magistrates courts in the direction of justice for the poor.

The Society's Committee on Criminal Courts has continued the work which it inaugurated 22 years ago and has quietly stood behind every constructive effort to improve conditions in the criminal courts and has taken many preventive steps to head off unwise departures and tendencies. The Committee never advertises its work and seldom gets into public print. It believes that it is more effective when it does not attract public attention. But, nevertheless, it is always there when wanted. A quarter-century of effective service has been continued during the year that has just closed.

#### FAMILY COURT

One of the chief efforts of the Criminal Courts Committee has been the attempt to secure the enactment of a new law establishing the Family Court as a separate part of the judicial system of the city.

The chief features of this effort are: The complete separation of the Family Court from crime and the criminal court system; the creation of a new specialized court that will treat the cases coming before it primarily as

<sup>7</sup> Excerpt from the *Annual Report of the Charity Organization Society of New York, 1931-1932*.

social problems; the establishment of a court that will be presided over by a bench of judges devoting their entire time to this work; the use of procedure more of a civil character than a criminal one.

This measure, which has been prepared after over a year of careful study and with consultation of all persons and groups actively interested in the administration of this court, was introduced in the legislature with strong support from the city's social service agencies and religious agencies of all denominations.

Owing solely to the financial depression and because the creation of a new court and new services in that court involved an increase in city expenditures, the bill could not be enacted into law at the last legislative session.

As soon as the financial situation of the city warrants it, it is the Committee's intention to renew its efforts for the enactment of this important and greatly needed constructive legislation.

#### MAGISTRATES COMMITTEE

Probably no act of the Committee could better illustrate the nature of its work than the work it has done in co-operating with a Special Committee of the magistrates, seeking legislation looking toward the improvement of procedure in their courts.

This Committee, in view of the C.O.S. Committee's long experience and intimate knowledge of the subject, conferred with and consulted it with regard to its legislative program. As a result of these conferences, some of the proposals which had seemed unwise to the C.O.S. Committee were abandoned, while others were strengthened.

At the request of the Chief City Magistrate, the Committee took entire charge of the effort to secure the enactment of the new laws which the magistrates desired and in this effort was gratifyingly successful. Although these measures were introduced in the legislature almost in its closing days, they were all enacted into law.

Among them may be mentioned the following:

1. Making traffic offenses no longer misdemeanors but merely offenses triable by a city magistrate.
2. Giving validity to magistrates' summonses, and changing the whole basis of the use of the summons in bringing people to the magistrates courts.
3. Providing for a single consolidated bail bond which could be given by a defendant at the time of his original arraignment before the magis-

trate and which would be good for his further appearance both before the magistrate and before a higher court when he was held to answer either for a misdemeanor or a felony.

4. The removal of compulsory education cases (truancy) from the magistrates' courts system and their transference to the Children's Court.

#### RELATED TO OUR DISTRICT WORK

To those unfamiliar with the work of the court, this bare recital of these four pieces of legislation might seem to have little significance or little relation to the district work of the C.O.S. in aiding families; but on the contrary they have a very wide significance. Take, for example, the transfer of compulsory education cases from the criminal courts system to the Children's Court. Heretofore, when a child played truant and it was the child who was being dealt with, the case was heard in the Children's Court. But where the parents were thought to be responsible for that truancy, the case was heard in a criminal court—in one of the magistrates courts—even though all the essential facts may have been brought out in proceedings against the child at some time in the past in the Children's Court. Obviously, this arrangement has not been desirable nor did it make for the proper treatment of the family problems involved. Under the new law, this is satisfactorily changed.

Proposals with regard to the treatment of wayward minors and women offenders were made which in the opinion of the Committee would have proved unwise. The Committee was able to persuade those making them of their un wisdom and no further action was taken. In bringing about this result the Committee did not act alone but summoned into conference and brought to its aid the united views of the leading social and civic agencies that had special knowledge of and interest in the treatment of women offenders.

#### LEGISLATIVE WATCHDOG

Limitations of space prevent even listing all of the important things which the Committee achieved during the year. Mention must be made, however, of the fact that, had the Committee not been on guard, probably the work of the past 40 years in preventing the indiscriminate use of pistols—a potent factor in serious crimes—would have been destroyed.

The Committee has acted as watchdog of the legislative situation. It considered 3,639 separate bills introduced at the legislative session. It gave detailed and intensive consideration to 104 different bills.



It successfully opposed a measure which would have made conviction for prostitution quite impossible in the future. It similarly successfully opposed measures which would have broken down the provisions of the law with regard to appeals in criminal cases and which would have returned the community to the old abuses connected with the free granting of bail which existed prior to 1926 and which would have permitted criminals out on bail to commit new crimes.

## DOCUMENT 3-E

### THE PLACE OF MERGERS IN COMMUNITY PLANNING<sup>8</sup>

#### I. INTRODUCTION<sup>9</sup>

... This movement to co-ordinate social work efforts has been in process for several decades and has been evident in every area of Jewish social service. The greatest spurt in the development of co-ordination to meet new conditions and the challenge of new thinking has been given by the organization of federations and welfare funds. Initially founded to promote central financing and to eliminate the annoyance and wastefulness of multiple campaigns, federations have been assuming by the logic of their existence more and more responsibility for the functional aspects of their affiliated agencies. Increased local pressures, as well as overwhelming emergencies overseas, have tended to bring the various groups in the Jewish community closer together and to minimize the special interests and prerogatives of individual agencies and groups. Such organizational devices as bureaus of Jewish education, central clearing bureaus for children's work, co-operative councils of family welfare organizations, made their appearance many years ago. This tendency to co-ordinate social work programming has been apparent in all communities, including those where federations may not have designated themselves as functional federations.

In the past several years, this tendency has gone a step further, as indicated in actual mergers and combinations of distinct agencies under one board, one executive, and a single budget.<sup>10</sup>

The temper of the times calls for intelligent planning and action, in order to obtain maximum benefits. But unless mergers perform meaningful

<sup>8</sup> A paper by Kurt Peiser, executive director, Federation of Jewish Charities of Philadelphia.

<sup>9</sup> This paper deals with mergers on the basis largely of community planning, but implicit throughout the report is the consideration of the human equation and human relations. No amount of emphasis on this important consideration can be too great, for it is upon the devotion, faith, and sacrifice of a large group of men and women, lay and professional, that the ultimate success of a merger depends.

<sup>10</sup> This is true not only of the Jewish agencies but of the nonsectarian agencies as well. The Family Welfare Association of America, for example, reports twenty-two mergers in twenty-one cities during the four-year period from 1935 to 1939 (see "Report of Family Welfare Association of America: Combinations of Private Family Agencies with Other Agencies, 1935-1939," *1938 Yearly Reports* (November, 1939)).

functions, they are no more than acrobatics in community organization. It seems appropriate, therefore, at this time to evaluate the pros and cons of mergers, to examine under what conditions they might be tried with some chance of success, and what their limitations are.

## II. FACTORS WHICH MAKE MERGERS DESIRABLE

The following reasons have been put forward in favor of merging agencies in the same or related areas of service:

1. *Financial economies.*—Mergers at the outset may involve greater financial cost. It may not be possible to put existing plant facilities to new uses immediately. Considerations of improved service and greater efficiency may call for sizable capital investments. Nevertheless, a more integrated program makes possible a more intelligent and efficient operation of services, both from the point of view of the client and of the general community. This should in the long run tend to result in a decrease in the budget as compared with original expenditures, especially if measured in terms of improved quality of service.

2. *Simplification of services.*—Philip Klein in his *Social Study of Pittsburgh* states: "... situations have occurred again and again in which the interest of the client seemed to be in danger of being crowded out by the multiplicity of efforts in his behalf by competing organizations. This increase of the apparent interest in behalf of those requiring help does not necessarily make for greater efficiency nor does the multiplicity of agencies insure against gaps in the provision of services really needed. There may develop instead a tendency to demoralize and pauperize the client and at the same time to neglect his basic interest."<sup>1</sup> It is as a protection against dangers such as these that mergers have a great deal to offer. The number of contacts which the client has with the agency is thus of necessity decreased. His difficulties and problems receive the attention of a single agency having at its disposal a variety of services for meeting them.

3. *Better personnel.*—The improved professional program resulting from the merger makes it possible to attract better personnel, which may be construed as indirectly benefiting the client.

4. *A more easily understood program.*—The popular notion that there are "too many agencies," "too much duplication," and "too much money" being spent by private agencies, even though not altogether supported by facts, stresses the urgent need for simplifying the machinery of private welfare services and calls for a set-up whose efficiency can be readily de-

<sup>1</sup> Philip Klein, *A Social Study of Pittsburgh* (1938), p. 405.

fended. This may lead to the development of greater community support for a more easily understood program.

5. *Common denominators.*—In some communities undifferentiated case work agencies are becoming popular substitutes for categorical or distinctly specializing agencies. In Pittsburgh, for example, it was found that the work of five agencies overlapped at certain points and failed to function as smoothly and as efficiently as they might have. I quote from Mr. Taylor: "The fundamental reason for most of the difficulties was found to arise out of the fact that basically there is little difference between them in the service they are rendering. The problems with which they all deal are essentially the same. The families they serve are frequently the same. They differ only in the emphasis they place on the problem of a particular member of the family. However, no matter with whose problem they were called upon to deal, the whole family situation, of which that individual is a part, must necessarily be taken into account."<sup>12</sup>

This is in consonance with the Milford Conference Report of 1929 which proclaimed that "... generic social case work is a common field to which the specific forms of case work are merely incidental . . . "; "... that the problem of social case work and the equipment of the social case workers are fundamentally the same for all fields. . . ."

6. *Gain to professional staff.*—The gain to the professional staff is likewise significant. The case worker serving as a general practitioner develops a greater resourcefulness, particularly if she can utilize effectively the various skills and special abilities of other members of the staff: supervisors, specialists, and field workers—possible in a larger agency—without restrictions due to separate agency considerations.

The cumbersome and inefficient referrals of cases between agencies for treatment of special problems often becomes unnecessary. The preparation of reports and the need for conferences and adjustments between workers on cases being handled jointly are eliminated, thus saving time and possible misunderstanding. There is a greater opportunity for professional improvement and experience. In a sound merger, beyond possible financial economies, there may be a real economy in a more efficient expenditure of staff time and energy.

7. *Administrative gains.*—Combinations of jobs, resulting financial savings, and more efficient planning, particularly on the administrative and supervisory levels, become possible. Greater efficiency also becomes effective in the office routine and mechanical operations of the agencies.

<sup>12</sup> Maurice Taylor, *The New Jewish Social Service Bureau of the Federation of the Jewish Philanthropies of Pittsburgh*.

III. PROCEDURES INVOLVED IN EFFECTING MERGERS TO  
MAKE THEM COMMUNALLY SIGNIFICANT

Both experience and common sense dictate that, if a merger is to mean more than a mere physical combination of agencies, education and mutual consent are indispensable for its success.

A merger may be initiated in one of several ways: (1) by a recommendation of a survey, (2) as a result of a demand on the part of the community, (3) by the executives of the agencies involved in the merger, (4) by the executive of the federation. But, however it *originates*, the process of merger involves "changes brought about by careful, co-operative study and planning from a central focal point in the best interests of the community."<sup>13</sup> It should not mean a sledge-hammering of agencies. Rather must it involve a thinking through of the changes with joint participation of all elements concerned. The *final* action is an agreement democratically arrived at on the basis of an acceptance of the values which the merger is to bring.

In between these two stages—initiation and eventuation—the forces of education and mutual consent play their part. Board members of the component groups who have developed strong loyalties and specialized interests need to have their knowledge and interests broadened to include an awareness of the problems which are common to all the agencies and the relationship which their special interests bear to the total picture. Pittsburgh has found it salutary, at least during the first year, to retain on the new board the entire membership of the component agencies, redistributing them, however, through functional committees in order to achieve the purposes stated above. Again I quote from Mr. Taylor: "The present boards will continue to act as functional committees, and gradually there will be an intermingling of the membership of these committees in order that all may become acquainted with the problems which were previously handled by the other agencies. Instead of each board member having a special interest in only one phase of the work, by this means each will have a chance to view his present interests in the light of their relationships to all other social problems."<sup>14</sup>

Private social work stands or falls by the degree of lay interest and participation in the work. Attention must, therefore, be given throughout the process of merger to an increased measure of lay participation; to the formulation and development of procedures for acquainting board member-

<sup>13</sup> Philip Bernstein, "Recent Trends in Local Community Organization," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Jewish Social Welfare*, 1940, p. 91.

<sup>14</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*

ships with the methods and problems of social work connected with the particular agencies; and to the interpretation of the work of these agencies to the community. All of this involves publicity and interpretation to the community, and attention to the problems of internal board education in connection with all aspects of the merged agency's program. Participation by the staff must not be forgotten, because only through a closer working together between board and staff can the intimate details of an agency's program be carried over to the board membership.

If the merger originates as the result of a survey recommendation made by outside experts, it is obviously desirable to involve local committees, representing the several agencies in every stage of the study and planning which resulted in the merger.

If the merger is initiated by the agencies themselves, it will likewise necessitate joint planning and co-operation with lay members. In this way many points of friction and artificial distinctions between agencies will be obliterated. At some stage in the process, the federation, as the representative of the total community, should be drawn into the planning. A special committee appointed for the purpose is probably the best way of accomplishing this end. This special committee and the boards of the various agencies, meeting separately and together, will be called upon to ratify the recommendations, first in principle and later in detail. These deliberations generally extend over a period of months, during which time each agency is allowed the fullest freedom in arriving at its own decision.

A decision to merge, even if arrived at through a process of education and mutual consent, is of itself no guaranty of success. It is merely the first organizational step. To insure that the benefits expected as a result of the merger will actually be achieved, the process of education and interpretation to the committees, boards, and staff, which has been started in the course of the merger negotiations, will have to be continued. The agencies and the board members who may have entered the combination with some reservation will need the proof of experience to convince them of the wisdom of the step they have taken. Perhaps the most important single factor in the success of a merger—assuming that the need for it has been understood and accepted—is a competent executive who, as the selected leader, acts as a liaison person between the board and staff and between the various groups involved. Not only must he protect the quality of the professional service rendered; he must also translate the will of the community as expressed by the board into actual day-by-day service to the client group. It is further his responsibility to clarify issues for the divergent elements within the board itself in order that policies adopted

and practices flowing from them shall be understood and willingly accepted by both board members and staff.

#### IV. THE HAZARDS IN EFFECTING MERGERS

The case which has been presented in behalf of the desirability of mergers should not blind us to the hazards involved in effecting them. Their success, if experience ultimately bears out the desirability of mergers, will be determined to a large degree by the extent to which the hazards involved have, in the first instance, been recognized; and, in the second instance, either removed entirely or minimized by careful planning and follow-up.

These briefly are some of the possible hazards. The enumeration of the hazards is coupled in some instances with an indication as to how they can be or *have* been dealt with, in particular reference to the communities which have recorded their experience with mergers.

1. *Resistance to change.*—Resistance is a natural concomitant to change, and it is inevitable that apprehension and insecurity should hover over the projection of any plans to modify the status quo. Philosophies, ways of work, identification with programs, become ingrained patterns; an orientation of people to the life around them. The board member who has beaten a path to the institution by years of attendance at its Saturday services instead of at his own Temple, the one who has found a vital place for himself on a hospital committee, the administrator who has governed an exclusive project for a decade or more, cannot but regard with concern a readjustment that may jostle him from his accustomed place.

Even though at times one may grow impatient with the obstructions of such loyalties, they are the stuff out of which our community programs have been welded, and any plans for change must be conditioned by a sympathetic understanding of the personal stakes involved. Great, however, as these individual loyalties may be, the need of the community must be paramount in the awareness that the community is larger than the individual. Our problem is to find ways and means for the transfer of these loyalties to the larger body politic to preserve the essence of personal devotion and utilize it for a greater good.

2. *The effects of unsound integration.*—The test of the validity of a merger is whether a better community service is rendered. In this connection, attention should be given to some of the questions raised by the Committee on Relationship between Family and Children's Work, published in 1937 by the Family Welfare Association of America. (1) Can the merged agency find means of maintaining the active group interests and

the variety of appeals which presumably have kept alive the individual agencies prior to merger? (2) Can the new agency furnish the same multiplicity of opportunities for lay participation and expression of special community interests? (3) Can the new agency substitute for the genuine value to be found in the long traditions of existing agencies and the loyalties they inspire, even recognizing that such traditions are frequently a bar to progress? (4) Will the merger result in an agency so large as to create administrative and other complexities and the removal of administrative and supervisory staff from close contact with the work and the clients?

Obviously, these are weighty and important questions and should be seriously considered in connection with any merger proposed. Perhaps they cannot all be answered in favor of merging. In such a case, it may be necessary to balance the probable advantages against probable disadvantages, and to act accordingly.

3. *The results of precipitate action.*—The idea of merger appeals to the imagination, but certain dangers are inherent in ill-conceived planning. Precipitate action may well take a serious toll in our communities by alienating devoted supporters, dislocating our programs, and creating new and bigger problems than we had heretofore. Needless to say, many communities regard the merger movement with apprehension. No large movement occurs without exposing motives alien to its basic purpose. It is not inconceivable that in some communities the drive for a single generic agency at the expense of many others may derive from the octopus complex of an administrator. Antagonisms to certain inadequate agencies may give rise to a desire to eliminate them because of their nuisance value without due regard for their constructive potentialities in the community, if regulated. Needless to say, in community housecleaning it is important to avoid "throwing out the baby with the bath water." Often latent grievances and differences are forced to the surface when a realignment of functions is proposed. Human frailties are such that even calloused agencies are reluctant to see their linens exposed to the breezes.

4. *Staff qualifications.*—Agencies involved in the merger may not be similar in standards and training of staff and in quality of performance, so that the merging of the groups may bring out complicated problems of unequally qualified staff and higher and lower levels of service.

In communities which have deemed it necessary and practicable to combine agencies with different functions, the problem will arise of finding supervisory personnel with sufficient background in specialized fields to give sound direction to workers handling the undifferentiated case loads. While we know that qualified people are available with experi-



ence in the separate fields, what are the possibilities for developing equally qualified people to serve in a multiple capacity? Interchange of supervisory personnel between, say, the family and the children's agency for the period of time necessary to become acquainted with both programs might qualify most of the supervisory staff of either agency to perform satisfactorily in both fields.

5. *Possible loss in staff skills.*—There are dangers that the skill of the staff in covering both children's and family work on a generic basis may tend to be sacrificed in the interests of generalized functioning. Perhaps the utilization of specialized knowledge—both through supervisors and consultants as well as through the use of special interests and abilities within the case work staff—may preserve some of the advantages and best elements of specialization.

6. *Personality conflicts.*—Questions such as the following should be asked and their implications guarded against: Do the board members know each other? Are they friendly or unfriendly? Do the boards of the two agencies have the same or a different point of view in regard to social work? Are there any traditions as to the functions of the agencies in the community? Has possessiveness developed among boards with long time service which would affect the merger unfavorably, not to mention the personalities of the executives and the professional staffs involved?

7. *Hazard of size.*—There is one more danger which we must guard against. It is the danger of *bigness*. In community organization, as in economics, there is a point of diminishing returns. Mergers resulting in an agency too large for practical purposes may bring about serious dangers. I have already referred to the loss of contact between the executive and staff members, and between personnel in the top ranks and the clients. In addition, there is the real possibility that the agency, lacking the challenge of competition, may become complacent and static in its philosophy, approach, and procedures. The value of experimentation may be minimized, differences in thinking frowned upon, and new ideas discouraged.

All these hazards—resistance to change; unsound integration; precipitate action; differences in qualifications of staff; loss of staff skills; personality conflicts; hazard of size—should be weighed carefully in advance. To ignore them is to invite certain failure! To anticipate them is half the battle won!

#### V. CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE VALIDITY OF MERGERS

The ultimate test for the validity of mergers is whether the quality of service rendered to the client becomes more effective. Rarely is a merger

promoted without the assertion and expectation that improvement of service to the client will be an inevitable result. Can this claim be supported? The validity of a good deal of what we are doing must be taken on faith. It is unfortunate that in the field of social work we have not yet discovered the necessary yardsticks for the exact measurement of results. In individual cases we can sometimes trace cause and effect, and over long periods of time we may trace shifts of a sociological character arising from changes in the structure of welfare organizations. However, the complex nature and variety of the factors involved in agency programming and community planning do not readily lend themselves to precise measurement. Moreover, mergers at this stage are still too recent to establish beyond question their end effects on the client and community. Nevertheless, despite the lack of precise measurement, our experience gives us some factual basis for estimating the probable effect of reorganization. We know that competition for clients, common among rival agencies, distorts individual planning. We know that uncertain policy-making, subject to administrative or community strategy, has an inevitable effect on the practitioners who must translate the function of the agency to the clients.


On the administrative side, likewise, we are well aware that the lack of unity of purpose and the separation of related agencies often create vital gaps which not only leave certain categories of cases unserved, but, by the incompleteness of community provisions, reduce the level of effectiveness of all of the agencies. Similarly, though this is not always true, variations in administrative standards often contribute to an unequal standard of professional personnel with performance ranging from hopeless inadequacy to highly developed practice. Last but not least, resources are often wasted through duplication of administrative, professional, and clerical service.

We can therefore assume, at least on a theoretical basis, that by eliminating these evils, improved standards and performance will result.

Thus, while we may not at this point have available adequate yardsticks to establish in orthodox fashion the end results of our reorganizations, it is possible to assert that the quality of service improves through the elimination of contradictions and inconsistencies. As the foundations of the service are strengthened through the development and rationalization of the programs, the benefits to the clients will be greater. It is, however, still too early to make any sweeping generalizations in this regard until the newer organizations have deeply rooted themselves and leveled off to a stable pattern of performance. Testimony—which I gratefully acknowledge at this time—furnished by executives of federations in six

communities which have undergone mergers tends to confirm the opinion that the organizations *are* serving on a sounder basis.

Mergers are not a panacea; they are far from a perfect solution of our communal ills. They are merely one more mechanism in sound communal planning designed to improve service to clients and advance the interests of the community at large. Only if we approach the question in this way, and evaluate the potentialities in the light of the advantages and the hazards cited above, can we decide whether or not a merger is indicated, or can we hope to reap the full benefits, if undertaken.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGENCY LEADERSHIP



THE community organization process cannot evolve and mature unless it enjoys the benefits of sound and skilful leadership. Leadership has been briefly defined as "the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find desirable."<sup>1</sup> Many other definitions have also been formulated.<sup>2</sup> The difficulty encountered in defining the term arises in part from the fact that there are different kinds of leadership. An interesting distinction has been drawn,<sup>3</sup> for example, between symbolic leadership and creative leadership. The symbolic leader emerges most conspicuously, perhaps, in political organizations, where he represents the group and acts in its behalf, often in an authoritarian manner. Creative leadership, on the other hand, evokes participation and co-operation, usually in furtherance of a specific program, which results in directed pressures much more powerful than could be exercised by any of the individual members of the group. There is also a difference between individual leadership and group leadership. Some individuals are endowed with talents that enable them to influence the thoughts and actions of many persons and groups with whom they have no apparent organic connection. More commonly, however, individuals exercise leadership chiefly within the group or groups with which they are identified. Group leadership implies a degree of solidarity and unity among a number of individuals that enables them, in their corporate relationship, to influence the attitudes and activities of other individuals and groups.

The community organization process seeks fulfilment, not through the symbolic leadership of individuals, but through the creative leadership of

<sup>1</sup> Ordway Tead, *The Art of Leadership* (1935), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed discussion of leadership see Dwight Sanderson and Robert A. Polson, *Rural Community Organisation* (1939), chap. xii, pp. 359-84.

<sup>3</sup> See Richard Schmidt, "Leadership," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, V (1937), orig. ed. IX (1933), 282-87.

groups. The objective is not acceptance but participation; the dynamic element is not the individual but the group. Within the group, individuals may be intrusted with the discharge of functions through which the group seeks to achieve its purposes. Certain individuals may emerge who, by the common consent of their associates, exercise key functions within the group, such, for example, as reducing to concrete propositions the purposes which the group has succeeded in expressing only in general terms. Thus, though some individuals are leaders within their groups, there is also, nevertheless, a group leadership so long as the concrete activities emerge from group consideration and involve both group approval and a common desire to contribute to the attainment of the formulated objectives.

#### THE PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE GROUP

The groups with whom the social worker has professional relationships are likely to be very diverse in composition and also very uneven in the degree of integration they have achieved. Hence each set of relationships has unique characteristics. One purpose, however, is common to all of these relationships: The social worker seeks to help the group to exercise the most effective quality of leadership it can develop. This means that in some instances the social worker functions primarily as a resource person. Some groups are made up of lawyers, business leaders, labor leaders, doctors, public officials, and others who have intellectual capacities and habits of discipline of a high order. They may also have clearly formulated objectives and deep attachment to the purposes to which the group is committed. In addition they may have acquired a degree of skill in the community organization process that enables them to move steadily forward in their efforts to influence other groups. Their need, therefore, may be primarily for the kinds of specialized assistance that the social worker's education and daily experience equip him to supply. In short, such a group may be expected to call upon the social worker chiefly for facts and professional judgments which it desires to consider in formulating plans or which it needs to implement its program.

At the other extreme are the groups that are held together by very tenuous bonds of interest. Such groups may have arrived at only a very vague and general formulation of purpose. In such instances the social worker is not able to function exclusively as a resource person, since the group is not clear as to the resources it needs. There is need, first, for unification and clarification of purpose. The social worker will be careful, however, not to try to impose a program upon the group. It is often possible to

induce a group to accept a formulation that is prepared by the social worker or others; but passive acceptance seldom, if ever, results in integration of the formulation into the fiber of group purpose. Hence the social worker chooses the slower route. He endeavors to arouse interest and participation, for he knows that this is the path that leads to the effective expression of the still vaguely articulated interests that hold the group together.

A new idea is seldom more persuasive to anyone than to the individual or group from whom it springs. The social worker may be convinced, for example, that there is urgent need in the community for an expansion of facilities at the county hospital. If he discusses the situation with the board of his agency, they may agree that the need exists and may even adopt a resolution asking the responsible authorities to provide additional service. No one would deny the importance of such an action. But groups, like individuals, remember longest the conclusions arrived at independently and are most likely to be moved to action by proposals they themselves suggest. Hence the outlook is more promising if the board formulates the conclusion. Then the conclusion is a synthesis of views that have been expressed during the course of group discussions. The thinking expressed by the board as it sought a formulation might possibly take such a course as the following: "It is clear that a large number of our clients fail to obtain needed medical care. This handicaps us in trying to help the clients to re-establish themselves. Other agencies seem to be facing this same problem. There is no private hospital in the community that is likely to be in a position to expand its free services. The county hospital can accept only a very few of the acute emergency cases we refer because the institution is already overcrowded. Thus we have no way to obtain for our clients the medical care they require, yet we cannot passively accept a situation which condemns people to prolonged illnesses and disabilities, many of which would quickly respond to treatment. Hence we must seek enlarged service in the one place where an expansion of facilities may be a possibility—namely, at the county hospital. Perhaps the other agencies that face this same problem will co-operate with us in urging these enlarged provisions."

During the course of these discussions, the social worker might assist materially by collecting data, by reciting the experiences of clients, and by raising questions for board consideration. But, in the final analysis, the formulation would emanate from the group and would thus be assured of more aggressive follow-up than could be expected if the social worker had merely obtained indorsement of a proposal he had presented.

The social worker in an administrative position must recognize from

the outset that a substantial portion of his time and energy must be devoted to the development of his relationships with the board and with the committees created to assist the board. Some executives are slow to adopt this point of view. They may think that, as professional persons, their job is to direct the professional work of the agency competently. Hence they devote so much of their time to the actual operation of the program that little energy remains for community organization. Yet community organization is one of the basic professional responsibilities of a social agency. The total obligation of the agency is only partially discharged unless this aspect of its work is recognized and cultivated.

It is true, of course, that the service which the agency has undertaken to extend to clients must be of competent quality. Leadership can seldom be exercised by an agency that has a reputation for inferior work. The best agencies now functioning in specific fields of service, such as child welfare, recognize this dual obligation by providing adequate staff assistance. This makes possible a division of labor such that the supervision of the service program does not infringe upon the community organization activities.

Any responsible social agency performs a function of prime importance in the community. Hence it is constantly confronted with problems to solve and with opportunities for distinctive service. The executive of the agency is therefore frequently in need of advice on specific problems, if only because he desires assurance that his actions are in line with the thinking of the group. He also needs help from members of the group in carrying through the formulated program. This means he is in frequent contact with the officers, board members, and committee members. In some instances he merely wants to get an opinion concerning some question currently pending. Or he may believe that a specific action by a layman connected with the agency is needed in order to accomplish some particular purpose. Thus he often has occasion to go to a member of the lay group to request him to undertake a job that is real and definite and must be satisfactorily performed if the agency's obligations are to be met. Such approaches are usually informal and personal. Specific tasks thus undertaken by members of the group increase lay participation and are, therefore, of prime importance in strengthening the group's capacity to motivate other groups. Perhaps it is a fairly safe rule that an executive should seldom, if ever, go to lay board and committee members merely to interpret the agency and the problems it meets. Almost always it is better to go to lay individuals with specific requests. One experienced executive stated his position on this matter very bluntly, as follows: "I don't spend time trying to interpret to the Board; I just try to put them to work." What

he meant, of course, was that participation is the best method of interpretation.

The following list is illustrative of the kinds of requests for specific assistance an executive may make of board and committee members:

1. A labor leader is asked to arrange for announcements to be read at certain union meetings, describing the services the agency is offering to men rejected from military service because of physical or mental disabilities.

2. A board member known to have a wide acquaintance at the City Hall is asked to inquire whether the agency can obtain permission to use one of the buildings in a city park as a meeting place for a club of foster-mothers.

3. A woman identified with a prominent woman's club is requested to find out whether she can obtain 200 free copies of a pamphlet published by the State Federation of Women's Clubs summarizing the legislation relating to the protection of women in industry. The agency plans to distribute the pamphlet to women clients who are employed in industries.

4. A banker is requested to approach a local capitalist to ask him to increase his annual gift to the agency.

5. The principal of a school is asked to discuss with certain parent-teacher associations the agency's need for an increased number of boarding-homes for dependent children.

In approaching board and committee members for advice or for assistance in a specific enterprise, the social worker will keep two policies in mind: (1) these contacts will be dispersed as widely as possible among the members of the group, not only in the interest of developing a broad base of participation, but also because it is necessary to avoid creating an impression that a few individuals are exercising an undue measure of control over operations; (2) the contacts will relate to matters that fall within the approved purposes of the group. In other words, a new policy springs from the group and requires formal approval, but within existing policies a wide range of variant situations arise. The executive is expected to interpret and apply the group's policies to these situations, and it is within this area that he usually seeks advice and assistance on an informal basis. Questions that fall outside the scope of existing policies are ordinarily considered on a more formal basis in a board meeting.

#### BOARD MEETINGS AND BOARD FUNCTIONS

The meetings of the agency board provide the executive with an important opportunity to assist the group in its efforts to exercise leadership in



community organization. Hence there should be careful advance preparation for each meeting. This responsibility falls, in the first instance, upon the chairman of the board and the executive.<sup>4</sup> Other officers and members of the board may also be responsible for preparing certain materials for board consideration. The treasurer, for example, will often need to consult the executive concerning present expenditures and the probable needs for the ensuing months of the fiscal year. Members of subcommittees frequently desire help in assembling information for use in the discharge of their assignments. The executive will wish to help any of the board members who desire assistance; for he will recognize that by strengthening their hands he helps to implement the leadership of the group. Hence he will be liberal with his time in responding to requests from officers, board members, and subcommittees and will in many instances take the initiative by volunteering to help. He will be careful, however, to avoid taking over responsibility from those who should carry it. His purpose is to give content to the board meeting by enhancing the capacity of individual members to contribute effectively to the group's deliberations.

Liberal use of subcommittees provides one means of enlarging the sphere of lay participation. Often a subcommittee consists exclusively of board members. In other instances it may be desirable to include some persons who are not members of the board. Occasionally, boards even appoint subcommittees made up exclusively of nonboard members. This is done, as a rule, when the assignment of the subcommittee requires knowledge of fields with which the board members are unfamiliar, but it is also a device that may be utilized as a means of enlisting the interest of key persons in the community.

Many boards have found that a succession of subcommittees is more productive than a group of standing committees. It is easy for a standing committee to lapse into inactivity. But a temporary subcommittee is usually asked to do some one specific thing. Usually people are more readily persuaded to serve on a temporary subcommittee than on a standing committee, for they realize that the subcommittee will do its job and then be discharged. The prospect of a manageable, short-time assignment is persuasive.

There are, of course, certain kinds of jobs that must be intrusted to standing committees. If an agency has endowment, for example, there must be some degree of continuity in the investment policy, and the responsible committee must therefore be appointed to serve for a term of reasonable length. On the other hand, some functions that have often been

<sup>4</sup> See Doc. 4-A (pp. 169-75) for a suggested method of preparation.

assigned to standing committees might profitably be turned over to a succession of subcommittees. A standing committee to keep the board informed of developments in the field of public relief may easily degenerate into a very perfunctory group. In many situations the board would perhaps be more fully informed if, during a year, this job were intrusted to a series of committees, each of which covered one special aspect of the problem, such as the following list suggests: current standards of local public relief budgets; present provisions for medical care of the poor; policies of the local public agency with respect to payment of rent; legislation pending in the state legislature relative to relief; personnel standards in the public agency.

It is, of course, the responsibility of the chairman and the board to determine how extensively they wish to make use of subcommittees. Nevertheless, if the practice is not well developed in the agency, the executive may wish to suggest it. Usually the suggestion will be most effective if it is presented as a possible means of attacking a specific problem that has come before the agency. If the initial efforts prove satisfactory, the board will then usually gravitate toward more extensive use of the subcommittee approach.

The content of board meetings will to some extent be determined by the division of responsibility agreed upon between the board and the executive. In theory, the board should make broad general decisions of policy, and the executive, with the aid of his staff, should make specific decisions within the framework of policy outlined by the board. Moreover, decisions of a distinctly professional character should presumably always be made by the staff. Thus the board of a children's agency might decide that the total amount to be spent each month for private boarding-homes must not exceed \$2,000; but the staff would decide, with respect to a particular child, whether he should be retained in an institution or tried out in a new foster-home.

In actual practice, however, it is not always wise to adhere rigidly to this division of responsibility. Sometimes decisions that would normally be made by the staff are referred to the board. This is done when it appears that the discussion evoked by the problem will presumably make an important contribution to the board's understanding of an issue of basic importance in community development. The decision to remove the Jones family from a substandard \$10-a-month tenement to a dwelling costing \$15 per month would perhaps normally be made by the professional staff within the general budgetary limitations established by the board for the total program. But the situation of the Jones family may be freighted with

significance as to the housing situation in the community. In that event the staff may decide that the facts should be set before the board in the interest of sharing with them concrete details that will help them to understand the community's needs in the field of public housing.

Specific cases of this type are usually brought to the board in one of three ways: (1) the case may be listed on the agenda for board consideration through advance agreement with the chairman when the agenda for a board meeting are being planned; (2) the case may be included in the monthly report prepared by the executive and read at the board meeting; or (3) the agency's case committee may request permission to summarize the case at a board meeting. If the agency has an effective case committee, the third of these three channels is probably best, for it involves participation on the part of several members of the group. But, regardless of the way in which cases reach the board, it is desirable to present them in such a form as to invite comments and opinions. This can often be accomplished by closing the case summary with one or two specific questions such as the following: (1) Does this case suggest that we should consider a review of our total case load to determine whether the number of clients living in substandard housing has increased? (2) Should we attempt to determine whether the housing shortage has influenced standards of inspection of dwellings? Sometimes questions of this type elicit information which members of the group have obtained in the course of their own professional or business life. But even though this does not occur, the questions may help the group to develop common points of view that will increase their capacity to function unitedly.

Any board or committee that is actively concerned to improve social conditions is likely to be a minority group in the community. As such, it will almost certainly fail to achieve some of its objectives. Some groups recognize this and are not disturbed by it. Groups that are less well oriented may become discouraged if their efforts are constantly frustrated. Such groups need to experience some successes. The social worker should recognize this difference in the degree of development the group has achieved. If some successes are needed to preserve group morale, the social worker will be well advised to attempt to interest the group in some problems that hold promise of successful solution within the not-too-distant future. In any case, however, minority groups have a definite contribution to make. Even though they fail to secure the adoption of the programs they espouse, they do frequently succeed in getting the majority groups to reappraise their points of view or even to modify them in the direction of greater liberality.

## COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

If the board is broadly representative of community interests and if board meetings are skilfully prepared and well conducted, there should be, as a result, a nucleus of citizens who are prepared to advocate needed improvements in the community's social services. This base can be appreciably broadened, however, if a similar educational process is carried on simultaneously among a group of committees that are likewise representative of various community interests. The number of committees will depend in any given case upon the program interests of the agency and upon the amount of time the professional staff can devote to the committees. The committees most commonly found in agencies are the executive committee, the membership committee, the finance committee, the committee on interpretation (publicity), and the departmental committees. In large districted agencies it is not uncommon to find, in addition, several committees in each district, such as a district case committee, a district committee on vocational placements, etc.

If the board of the agency is large and board meetings are held infrequently—for example, once a month—it will usually be necessary to have an executive committee. The executive committee is charged with handling the business of the agency in the intervals between board meetings, subject to the approval of the board. It is ordinarily made up of the elected officers of the board and two or three other board members—usually members who are the chairmen of important committees. Most agencies also have a finance committee. The functions of the finance committee vary, depending upon the manner in which the program is supported. In some instances the finance committee bears the responsibility of organizing and conducting the agency's annual drive for contributions. Again, it may be primarily a budget committee whose job it is to appear before the community chest with a request for the amount needed to carry on the forthcoming year's work. Or the committee may have charge of the investment of the agency's endowment. In any case, because of the intimate relationship between finance and program, the chairman of the finance committee is usually also a member of the executive committee.

Some agencies attempt to obtain and to cultivate a large membership in the community. If this is the policy, the agency needs a membership committee. If the membership drive is conducted in conjunction with the drive for funds, a single committee may be in charge of both tasks. Most agencies also need a committee on interpretation. The members of such a committee can seldom be counted upon to produce publicity material. They function primarily as advisers. In addition, they are often able to

secure space in publications and to arrange speaking engagements which the professional staff could not obtain without their assistance. Departmentalized agencies frequently have advisory committees to serve each department. For example, an agency with a family welfare department, a legal aid department, and a summer camp department might be expected to have at least three functional advisory committees, one for each department. Sometimes it is possible and advisable for a department to utilize the services of more than one advisory group. For example, the family welfare department might organize a case committee, a committee on housing, and a committee on vocational guidance. In a large agency the supervisor of the department is usually responsible for the work with the lay committees that serve in an advisory relationship in his department.

The foregoing list of committees is, of course, not exhaustive. In general, committees are organized to meet standing needs or to serve special purposes as occasion demands. All appointed committees are subject to the general supervision of the board. Committees elected by the membership, such as a nominating committee, are not subject to the direction of the board, though they frequently require assistance from the staff in carrying out their obligations.

In its relationship with all committees, both appointed and elected, the professional staff should keep constantly in mind the need to help the committee members to enhance their capacities as interpreters of the program and of the community's social needs. In other words, the preparation for committee meetings should be careful and thorough, and the meetings should be conducted along the same general lines as a meeting of the board itself. Each new member selected for the board or for a committee represents a new job for the professional staff. To induct a new individual into his job, to orient him with respect to the agency and its function in the community, and to help him to become an understanding participant is as much the responsibility of the professional staff as the conduct of the program itself. The new member can often be helped to gain perspective by inviting him to attend staff meetings, by giving him reports and other documents to read, and by consulting him informally about agency problems either at his office, at his home, or at the luncheon table.

Since many of the committee members may be relatively unfamiliar with the total operations of the agency, it is necessary to exercise vigilance to prevent misunderstandings. The committees may take actions that are inconsistent with the policy of the board. Or they may spend time in working out a program that has already been before the board for consideration and has been rejected. Likewise the board may sometimes take

action on matters that should have been sent first to one of the committees. Or the board may adopt a policy that runs counter to the recommendation of one of the committees. Such occurrences arouse attitudes that are not favorable to the agency's program of community development. They result, not in integration, but in alienation of group from group.

It is a safeguard against such incidents to provide brief written instructions for committees, outlining their functions and describing their relationship to the board. The board, since it creates most or all of the committees, should prepare a concrete statement of its assignment for each committee when it is appointed. With the help of the staff the board should also formulate a definition of the relationships among the various parts of the agency that can be transmitted to each new committee. The executive should likewise be on the alert at board meetings to call attention to proposed actions that might seem to circumvent the legitimate activity of one of the committees. If the board disagrees with a recommendation made by a committee, it is desirable, if time permits, to transmit the reactions of the board to the committee with a request that the committee give further consideration to the problem in light of the points of view brought out in the board meeting. Chairmen of committees made up of nonboard members may occasionally be invited to attend board meetings and to report to the board concerning the work of the committee. This plan gives recognition to the committee and may stimulate it to increased effort. Moreover, it leads to personal contacts between board and committee members that may be helpful in ironing out any misunderstandings that might arise.

#### COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH GOVERNING BODIES

If the members of the board or of the committees become clearly identified with the agency in the public mind, they may receive complaints, from clients or others, relative to the work of the agency. Perhaps the most familiar complaint is that less than justice has been done to some particular applicant or client personally known to the complainant. All members should be urged not to conceal these complaints but to report them promptly to the office. Usually such cases provide an excellent opportunity to do a good piece of interpretation. The professional staff immediately assembles the facts and reports them to the member who received the complaint—preferably in a personal interview. Perhaps the complaint rests upon a very flimsy factual basis. Or it may reflect a genuine need which the agency was unable to meet. In either case a careful exposition of the facts will

often help the board or committee member to obtain a clearer understanding of the actual working of the program and of the direction in which it probably should develop. Since the board or committee member was the one to whom the complaint was originally made, the social worker should offer to accompany him to the complainant and to help explain the situation. The member may or may not wish to accept this offer. If he does so, it may be possible to carry the interpretive process one step further. If the member prefers to see the complainant unaccompanied by the social worker, the latter should be very sure that the member has a grasp of the facts and should offer to provide such documentary material as may legitimately be used in such an interview.

#### THE BOARD AS AN ADVANCE GUARD

If a modification in an agency's policy will directly affect the work of another agency, it is desirable for the proposed change to be discussed by representatives of the boards of the two organizations. For example, a settlement may decide to discontinue its boys' club work. This decision will be of immediate concern to the Children's Protective Agency, which has been in the habit of referring boys to the settlement as a part of its plan of case work treatment. Usually such matters are taken up by the executives of the agencies concerned, and often this is the only kind of clearance that can be arranged. If it is possible, however, something is usually gained by arranging for one board to explain its proposed change of policy to the other board. The objective here is to broaden the understanding of both boards by giving them firsthand contact with the kind of social problems encountered by another organization.

Occasionally situations arise that expose an agency and its program to serious criticism in the community. Newspapers may enter the lists either for or against the agency. Private agencies have encountered such experiences as a result of giving, or failing to give, relief to strikers. In recent years public agencies have been a frequent target and have been pilloried for political purposes on the basis of charges fabricated for the occasion. Private agencies are always governed by lay boards, and many public agencies are likewise in the hands of an unpaid board of local citizens. The criticisms leveled against the agency may be directly harmful to these people, not only in their personal relationships, but in their businesses or professions. Hence it has sometimes been said that, in such circumstances, the professional staff should bear the brunt of the criticism and should, so far as possible, shield the lay members of the board. This can be done by issuing statements over the name of the executive rather than through the

board, by receiving irate delegations in the office with no board members present, and in other similar ways. The argument is that lay persons who are giving unselfishly of their time to promote the work of the agency should not be penalized for their altruism.

Persuasive as this argument may be, the policy it defends is in most instances wrong. If the issue is one of real importance, there should be no opportunity for anyone to assert that it resulted merely from a muddying of the waters by the employed staff. It should be clear from the outset that a responsible group of local citizens have given thought to the problem and have come to conclusions they are willing to defend. In other words, the social worker should refrain from taking any action that would deprive the lay group of the opportunity to identify with the policies they have approved.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE STAFF

In one sense the executive of an agency is a "middleman." He is a connecting link between the board and the staff. Some executives attempt to identify with the board; others incline rather to identify with the staff. Either position tends to erect emotional barriers that complicate the development of sound relationships. The wise executive will refrain from identifying totally either with board or with staff. His objective should be to understand clearly his obligations to both groups and to relate his own attitudes to these respective obligations.

It is not enough for the executive, in his relationships with the board, to attempt to represent the interests of the staff with respect to working conditions only. If the staff is made up of skilled professional people, the executive must try to see that their views on larger questions, such as program development and community organization, also reach the board. In fact, a major objective of personnel administration should be to utilize as fully as possible the contributions which subordinate staff members may make in promoting the processes of community organization. Some executives undoubtedly fail to realize their responsibilities in this respect.

In urban communities there are usually a number of community-wide planning activities proceeding simultaneously. It is not necessary that the executive accept personal responsibility with respect to each of these undertakings. In fact, there are a number of reasons why it is wise for the executive to ask that the agency be represented on some of these planning committees by professional members of his staff. This practice not only relieves the executive of some of his outside responsibilities but also broadens the base of agency participation and contributes to the maintenance of staff morale.



The nature of some community work is such, however, that the executive cannot delegate responsibility to a member of his staff. But even in such cases the executive can share his experience with the staff. At staff meetings the executive can tell his associates something about the work of the community-wide committees on which he is serving and can ask their advice relative to issues pending before these planning groups. This practice encourages the staff to give thought to the broader problems of community organization and places at the disposal of the executive the thinking of the entire professional group. Unless the staff members do share in this way in the experiences of the executive, they are ill prepared to promote in the community the objectives which the wider social-planning groups envisage.

Staff meetings should be a means of relating the employed personnel to the total community organization process sponsored by the agency. This objective will be approximated only in case the staff meeting is recognized as a channel through which lay and professional thinking may be brought together. The executive is the principal medium through which this interchange and interaction is accomplished. Hence he has a special obligation to devote thought and effort to the advance preparation for staff meetings. Frequently it is desirable for the staff to select a small committee to plan the agenda for the staff meetings.<sup>5</sup> In such instances the executive is an *ex officio* member of the committee and participates in the development of plans for each meeting. In many agencies the executive assumes complete responsibility for planning the staff meetings. However, the wise executive will, under such an arrangement, consult informally with staff members to solicit their suggestions and will make clear to every employee his right to submit proposals for inclusion in the agenda. As Document 4-B suggests, a staff meeting that focuses solely upon internal problems of the agency falls short of measuring up to an adequate professional standard; it is equally important to relate the program and the thinking of the personnel to the agency's total current effort in community organization.

Good personnel administration within an agency ordinarily involves supervisory interviews and periodic evaluations of staff performance. Both types of contacts may be utilized to develop the community organization process, and both can be given an educational content that involves reciprocal benefits; for they should not only stimulate the thinking of the staff member but also broaden the understanding of the supervisor. Supervisory interviews commonly center upon the service program of the

<sup>5</sup> See Doc. 4-B (pp. 176-78) for further discussion of the agenda for staff meetings.

agency. They include discussion of specific cases, interpretation of agency policies, and the planning of future programs. The periodic evaluations of staff are, in most agencies with good standards of personnel administration, discussed in person with the individual evaluated. The purpose is to help the employee to achieve an objective understanding of his strengths and weaknesses, to provide him with an opportunity to give to the supervisor his reaction to the handicaps that hamper effective practice within the agency, and to strengthen the professional relationship between the two individuals. Both in supervisory interviews and in discussions of evaluations, the skilful supervisor will obtain information that derives from the worker's firsthand contact with clients and with the resources used in treatment. This information may well provide clues to community problems that will later be referred to the board for attention. The discussion should also help the employee to see more clearly the relationship between his specific function and his potential contribution as a fact-gatherer and an interpreter. This is a point of view which needs to be stressed very frequently; for the worker's zest for his job is enhanced if he catches a vision of its broader implications for community development.

Agency policies with respect to staff development also have a direct bearing upon the organization's total contribution to the community organization process. It is desirable that each employee be persuaded of the agency's desire to enable him to make his maximum professional contribution. This attitude is developed in the worker by his recognition of the progressive character of the agency's personnel practices. Does the agency encourage participation in community planning by permitting attendance at meetings during the working day? Is there a library with current publications to enable the staff to keep informed about pending legislation and other new developments? Is the employee permitted to make an arrangement to attend classes? Does the agency provide financial help to encourage attendance at important conferences in other cities? The relationship between these internal policies and the staff's capacity to contribute to community organization is apparent. The agency that seeks to enhance the capacities and enlarge the interests of its staff will, over a period of time, make a more significant contribution to community development than is likely to result from exclusive preoccupation with the immediate service program.

In short, agency leadership in the community requires the mobilization of the total assets of the organization, both lay and professional. Board, committees, and employed staff should constitute a single unified team.

The various members of the team have specific functions, but all discharge them in such a way as to contribute to a commonly accepted set of objectives. Likewise, all are related specifically to the processes by which these objectives are modified. Unless relationships of this character prevail, the agency will not achieve the organic leadership required to meet the challenges it faces in the community.

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DOCUMENT 4-A  
PREPARING FOR A MEETING OF THE BOARD OR  
OF A COMMITTEE<sup>6</sup>

The meeting of a board or a committee provides one of the major opportunities to assist in the community organization process. Hence there should be very careful preparation for each such meeting. The social worker who walks into a board or committee meeting unprepared is as remiss in his obligations as the teacher who fails to plan in advance for the meeting of his class.

It is convenient to keep a folder for the board and for each committee and to assemble material therein to present at the next meeting. Each member of the staff should be encouraged to keep an eye open for material that would be useful for presentation to the board or to one of the committees. The executive and the supervisors have a special responsibility in this regard. The correspondence that passes over their desks, the problems that arise in the course of the day's work, the interviews with clients, staff members, and collaterals are all potential sources of material for board and committee work.

The executive of the agency usually has the responsibility of preparing agenda for board meetings and for some or all of the committee meetings. In large organizations, subordinate members of the staff may be in charge of the work of certain committees, such as the case committee, or the committee on interpretation. In any case the person responsible should prepare the agenda several days in advance of the meeting. The usual procedure is to arrange to see the chairman of the board or committee. The professional worker takes with him to the interview the material he has been collecting for the next meeting. The chairman will doubtless also have in mind certain matters he wishes to present. Together the two work out and agree upon the items that will be included and the order in which they will be presented.

In general, the most important items should appear near the top of the agenda. This does not mean that the most important item comes first. As a matter of fact, certain routine matters, such as the minutes of the preceding meeting, usually head the list. It is not uncommon for some board

<sup>6</sup> Material prepared by the author for discussion at an institute sponsored by the Tennessee Conference of Social Work at Chattanooga, March, 1941.

or committee members to arrive late. The routine items provide some leeway for late arrivals whose participation in the more important matters is needed. But the important items should not be listed last. Some of them may require considerable discussion. Hence they should not be taken up when time is growing short; for there may then be a disposition to hurry through them. If an item is believed to be highly controversial, it may be best to have it follow several other items on which agreement seems likely to be reached. Agreements, like disagreements, have a cumulative effect. A sharp disagreement at the beginning of the meeting may color all of the subsequent discussions. Conversely, a series of agreements may create an atmosphere that is favorable to the dispassionate consideration of controversial material. It is never possible to predict accurately how much discussion a particular item will evoke. Sometimes questions of major importance are disposed of very quickly, and sometimes items that appear to be of minor importance are debated for a half-hour or more. If a meeting lasts too long, the quality of discussion presently begins to deteriorate. When that point is reached, the chairman can, by prearrangement, ask the staff member whether the remaining items of the agenda can be held over until the next meeting. If the matters of least urgency have been placed last, it should usually be possible to agree upon such an arrangement.

After the chairman and the executive have agreed upon the agenda, the necessary material for the meeting should be promptly prepared in the agency's office. The following list, relating to the meeting of the board of a private family welfare society, illustrates the procedure:

#### AGENDA

1. Minutes of preceding meeting—Exhibit A
2. Financial report—Exhibit B
3. Report of progress—Exhibit C
4. Report of the subcommittee on emergency financing
5. Report of the subcommittee on renting new office quarters
6. Report of the subcommittee on state relief legislation—Exhibit D
7. Decision relative to donation to state conference—Exhibit E
8. Other business
9. Adjournment

The agenda should be placed in the hands of each member at the beginning of the meeting. If it is apparent that thoughtful preparation has preceded the meeting, the quality of response from members will usually be enhanced. For this reason it is a good practice to hand to each member a manila folder bearing his name and containing the material that is to be taken up at the meeting. When the member opens this folder, he finds first

a single sheet on which are listed the agenda, as suggested above. The various exhibits follow.

The first exhibit is ordinarily a copy of the minutes of the preceding meeting. The practice of mimeographing the minutes makes it possible to move quickly through the routine matters to the items that require discussion. The number of copies reproduced should be slightly more than double the number of board members. A copy may then be mailed to each member soon after the meeting and a second copy will be available to place in his folder at the next meeting. Thus each member is given an opportunity to read the minutes carefully at his home or his office. If he neglects to bring them with him to the following meeting, the second copy is available in his folder for him to consult. In this way it is usually possible to dispense with the reading of the minutes—a routine that is often time consuming and dull.

The financial report is usually presented by the treasurer or by the chairman of the finance committee. Since the board is responsible to the community for the handling of the agency's resources, it is desirable to have the figures on which this report is based available for consideration. Exhibit B may contain the entire text of the treasurer's report. More often it will be only a financial summary to which the treasurer refers in giving an oral report and an analysis of the agency's fiscal status. In either case the basic data should be in the folder of each member in such form that he can easily follow the discussion. The report as accepted should be attached as an exhibit to the minutes of the present meeting when they are prepared later. Likewise, care should be taken to jot down notes so that any questions or comments relative to the financial report can later be incorporated in the minutes. Frequently the discussion of the financial report evokes discussion leading to action. This action may consist in a revision of policies to keep within the budget or to expend a surplus, or it may relate to the appointment of new subcommittees to investigate the possibility of instituting economies, finding new revenue, etc. In any case it is usually best to consider the financial report early in the meeting and to allow ample time for discussion; for the decision with respect to ensuing items will frequently be conditioned by what the financial report reveals.

The monthly report, or "report of progress," as it is often called, should logically follow the discussion of finances. Moreover, this report, though it is in writing in the folder of each member, should be read aloud by the executive. The report provides an outstanding opportunity for the executive and his professional staff to promote community organization. Since

it is to be read aloud, it should be brief—possibly not to exceed 15 minutes in length. Also, it should be well and interestingly written. Usually it will be a compound of three elements: statistics, case histories, narrative analysis. All of these elements should be varied from month to month. In other words, an effort should be made to avoid falling into a pattern that is repeated monotonously in each succeeding report. For example, in one report, attention might be given to the statistical trend of the case load over a period of recent months or years. The following month, the case load of a recent month might be analyzed in statistical terms, showing such social attributes as occupation of breadwinner, nativity, race, marital status, etc. Again, attention might be given to the relationship between case load and expenditures, indicating whether average cost per case is increasing or decreasing.

Case histories may be used, either to illustrate a development suggested by the statistical data or to show vividly the kinds of problems the agency is encountering. Such histories should conceal the identity of the client and should be given in summary form. It should usually be possible to outline the salient points of a case in a document not more than one page in length. "Fine writing" should be avoided in preparing a case history; that is, the summary should be a forthright statement of facts that speak for themselves rather than an appeal to the emotions, heavily weighted with florid phrases.

The narrative analysis may relate to any problem germane to the agency's field of interest. In some cases this may be an administrative problem; for example, a statement concerning the difficulties encountered in attempting to attract suitable applicants under the agency's existing salary scale. Or it may reveal an area in which co-ordination of effort has proved difficult, such as in clearing with other agencies the names of children recommended for the municipal summer health camp. Or the analysis may be directed toward some wider problem, such as the need for a psychiatric service in the community to which problem children might be referred. Frequently it is effective to reinforce the narrative analysis by citing statistics and illustrative case histories.

The effort to avoid monotony in the monthly reports should not result in introducing too wide a variety of problems. If interest is scattered over numerous fields, it will be difficult to achieve a focus. Let us assume, for the sake of an illustration, that housing appears to be the most serious problem the agency encounters in its daily work. In that case the board must not be permitted to lose sight of housing. Although housing may not be mentioned in every monthly report, it will appear again and again

throughout the year—as often, in fact, as new evidence is obtained that will help the board to achieve a grasp of the problem. There is an abundance of evidence to prove that this kind of skilful recurrence to a single issue gradually builds up real understanding and conviction.

The executive may often wish to attach to his monthly report certain exhibits which he does not plan to read aloud. If these are attached to Exhibit C (the monthly report), they may be numbered consecutively C-1, C-2, C-3, etc. In one month, for example, the executive may wish to show the volume of service rendered by the agency without taking the time to read the figures. He might achieve his purpose in a single sentence, as follows: "The number of new cases accepted by the agency this month was larger than in any month since March of last year, as the data in Exhibit C-1, attached, indicate." The data referred to may be presented in simple tabular form. Or occasionally a more vivid impression will be produced by transforming the tables into charts or pictograms. Sometimes a letter from a client, from another agency, or from some individual contributor may be worth sharing with the board. The curiosity of the board can usually be sufficiently aroused by a casual reference to the communication, as follows: "An interesting criticism of our policy with respect to the supplementing of mothers' pensions was received this month from one of our contributors and is appended hereto as Exhibit C-2 for consideration by the Board." This kind of reference calls attention to material that will not be read aloud and does it in such a way that at least some of those present will be moved to examine the document later.

The monthly report should give some attention to constructive accomplishments achieved by the agency, as well as to the unsolved or pending problems. In describing accomplishments the executive should lay little or no stress on his own contribution and should give credit, wherever possible, to lay members of the board or of the committees. The executive who attempts to "sell himself" by reporting his own achievements usually succeeds only in revealing his own defensiveness. The executive "sells himself" to the board indirectly, in most cases, by conducting himself in such a way that the board, independently, arrives at a favorable evaluation of his character and talents. On the other hand, the board members, who are not professional social workers, need the encouragement that comes from a recognition of what they have accomplished. If any part of the executive's monthly report is ordinarily printed in local newspapers, it is especially important that the agency's accomplishments be associated with the names of lay citizens. The layman almost always has a following among some particular group in the community. This



group will naturally be more interested in an activity sponsored by one of their associates than in a program associated with the name of a social worker employed by the organization.

The sample agenda given above include three reports of subcommittees. One of these (Item 6 of the agenda) is in writing. The other two are to be given orally by the respective chairmen. Usually it is difficult to get subcommittees to reduce their reports to writing. If they do so, the text of the report should be included as an exhibit in the folder presented to each board member at the beginning of the meeting. Occasionally the executive can obtain from a subcommittee certain data which it has collected in the course of carrying out its assignment. When this is the case, it is desirable to include such data as an exhibit to which the board members may refer when the subcommittee chairman is giving his oral report.

Continuous use of subcommittee reports may easily become tiresome and ineffective. Variety is needed in presenting material to the boards. Sometimes the chairman will agree to present orally a matter which needs board consideration. In that case the item should be listed in the agenda so that it will not be overlooked. The following form is adequate: "The new Pauper Law and its implications for our program—statement by the Chairman." A statement by the executive provides another means by which material may be placed before the board. Usually such statements should be in writing and should be as brief as the character of the material permits. In the sample agenda above, Item 7 ("Donation to State Conference") is a matter concerning which the executive has prepared a brief statement for the board. This statement will give the facts concerning the appeal, the policy of the agency in the past with respect to it, and any other pertinent information. Such statements sometimes do and sometimes do not include the executive's recommendation. Ordinarily it is best for the executive to state facts only and to hold his recommendation in reserve until it is requested.

The agenda for any meeting should always include the item "Other Business." Otherwise, the executive and the chairman are open to the charge that they dictate the content of the meetings. An experienced chairman will occasionally remind the board that the other-business item affords an opportunity to bring up any matter that is on the mind of any member. The invitation is seldom accepted, but the psychological effect of making the offer is wholesome.

The entire task of preparing agenda for a meeting of the board or of a committee should be regarded as the planning of an educational experience. Participation is the objective sought. The chairman may have this

objective clearly in mind and may need very little help from the executive in outlining plans for the meeting. Even under such circumstances, however, the executive, because he is so close to agency operations, will usually have useful suggestions to offer. In some instances the chairman will need to draw heavily upon the executive's suggestions. The executive will bear constantly in mind, however, that the meeting belongs to the group and that the leader of the group will carry the responsibility of presiding over the discussions. Excellent agenda prepared exclusively by the executive are likely to be of less significance in the long run than mediocre agenda prepared by the group leader, perhaps on the basis of some consultation with the executive and, preferably, with other members of the board or committee.

## DOCUMENT 4-B

### AGENDA FOR A STAFF MEETING<sup>7</sup>

Comparatively few agencies make the widest possible use of staff meetings. In some organizations such meetings are seldom or never held. In other agencies staff meetings are regarded merely as opportunities to tell the staff what the executive and the board have decided to do. Actually, carefully planned staff meetings are of great importance, not only in improving the quality of personnel administration, but also in stimulating activity in community organization.

The agenda for staff meetings should be carefully prepared in advance by the executive. Sometimes a committee elected by the staff assists in this procedure. If possible, the agenda should be distributed a few days prior to the meeting, to enable staff members to think through in advance some of the problems that will be discussed. Ordinarily the executive presides at staff meetings. It is important, of course, that the discussions proceed at a professional level and that the gathering be not permitted to degenerate into a social affair. The tone of the agenda will usually set the tone for the meeting. The following list suggests the kinds of material appropriate for staff consideration:

#### AGENDA FOR STAFF MEETING

1. Minutes of preceding meeting—Exhibit A
2. The community-wide committee on care of transients—statement by executive
3. Educational leave; report of joint committee of board and staff—Exhibit B
4. The state conference; report of subcommittee of staff
5. The monthly statistical report; analysis by statistician; discussion—Exhibit C
6. Presentation of the case of the B—— family. Miss Brown
7. Child neglect. What data can this agency contribute to the state-wide study?
8. Other business
9. Adjournment

This list illustrates several practices that merit comment. The second item relates to a problem in which all social workers are interested—the destitute transient. A community-wide committee has been appointed to study this problem and to make recommendations with respect to its solution. The executive, as member of this committee, plans to report to his staff the action the group has taken to date. He also plans to ask the opin-

<sup>7</sup> A statement prepared by the author for use in an institute sponsored by the Indiana Conference of Social Work, 1938.

ion of the staff relative to questions currently pending before the community-wide committee. In this way the entire professional staff will be brought into a participating relationship with an activity in which all of them have a direct interest. Moreover, their support will be enlisted for the promoting of any proposals that may ultimately emerge from the community-wide committee.

Item 3 relates to an issue in the field of employment practices. Too often staff members have little or no chance to express their views on these questions. In this instance the implication is that the question of granting educational leave to employees has been studied by a subcommittee made up jointly of board members and of staff members. One of the staff members will report on the present status of the work of this joint subcommittee. Although joint committees of this type usually are created to work out some question in the area of employment practices, they may sometimes be used to assemble facts with respect to some broader concern of community organization. But, whatever the nature of the assignment, there is usually a gain in bringing board and staff members together in a working relationship. If the experience proves productive, a basis is established for more effective co-operation in promoting the agency's objectives.

Item 4 relates likewise to the work of a subcommittee, though in this case the members were exclusively from the employee group. The state conference is to meet in a near-by city within a month. It will not be possible for all members of the staff to attend. A subcommittee of staff members has been assigned the task of working out some plan that will enable as many as possible to attend without crippling the work of the agency. The plan submitted may need modification, but in all probability, even though the original plan is modified, it will be more gracefully received by the staff than if it had been wholly imposed from above.

Actually, this item illustrates a practice that is now being adopted in many of the best agencies. Staff committees are being used, not only to work out personnel problems, but also to make recommendations with respect to program. It is now recognized that the employees of the best social agencies are professionally trained persons who possess special bodies of knowledge relating to social problems. It is folly for an agency to formulate policies without first taking advantage of this knowledge. Certainly the program plans of the agency are more likely to be oriented in the direction of more adequate community provisions if the firsthand knowledge of the social workers is given thoughtful consideration.

Items 5, 6, and 7 illustrate three types of questions appropriate for staff discussion. The monthly statistical report may reveal changes in the

volume and trend of the case load or in the social attributes (race, marital status, age, etc.) of the beneficiaries. The professional staff will be concerned to interpret the meaning of these changes. Moreover, staff members must be aware of significant changes in order to keep their day-to-day interpretation of the agency in line with reality. The presentation of a case may also stimulate constructive discussion. Analysis of the validity of the treatment plans is certainly appropriate material for meetings of professional workers. Sometimes these cases also provide workers with illustrative material that can be used effectively in interpreting social needs in the community. Most lay citizens are more deeply impressed by the details of one concrete case than by a sheaf of statistics.

The study of child neglect referred to in Item 7 is being launched by the State Department. Obviously this study may provide the basis for important social legislation. The professional staff will be concerned to understand the plan for this study in order that they may explain it to others. They will also wish to ask, with respect to their own agency, such questions as these: "What data can we now contribute to this study?" "What changes must we institute in our recording in order to obtain the data that may be needed?" "In what ways may we begin to build up interest in the study among the lay groups associated with us in the program of this agency?" Thus, through staff meetings and the cultivation of staff relationships, the whole area of administrative responsibility that we often call "staff management" may be developed in such a way as to contribute directly to the process of community organization.

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## CHAPTER V

### AGENCY LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY

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**A**FTER social agencies have come into possession of the data relating to a specific social problem, they then face the task of disseminating these facts and interpreting them to the community. As has been suggested in the preceding chapter, a great deal of this interpretation may be carried out by the board and the committees. Moreover, relationships within the staff may be developed in such a way that each member, in addition to performing his tasks as a case worker or a group worker, may also contribute directly to the process of community organization.

But there is also a need to reach the groups not directly responsible for the administration of the program, including the client group. These many ill-defined groups have sometimes been called "the phantom public." Yet this public, nebulous as it may be, not only actually does exist but is, in a certain sense, the ultimate repository of power in a democracy. Consciously or unconsciously, every able administrator recognizes this fact and tries to discharge his responsibilities in a way that would meet with public approval if the spotlight of public opinion should be thrown upon his work. Our concern in this chapter, therefore, is to consider some of the aspects of agency administration that may directly influence the lay public and to note the implications of these relationships to community organization.

Ordinarily, social workers live in the communities in which they practice. Hence they have a personal life within the community, as well as a professional life. This means that, to some extent, interpretation of social needs may be accomplished in the normal social contacts of daily life. If friends and acquaintances manifest curiosity about social problems, the social worker is under some responsibility to answer questions. This does not mean that the social worker takes his job completely into his social life; it merely means that a great many people have heard and read many

conflicting statements about the social services and that some of them would like to know the truth. Such persons have a right to expect that they can obtain some authentic information from friends who are in the field of social work.

Most social agencies also make some kind of organized effort to interpret their work to the public. Many of them, however, do not make maximum use of staff members in carrying forward this task. It is true that some people do not speak effectively and that some object to speaking, but oratory is not required to explain a social program or a social problem, and many employees, if they know their jobs thoroughly, can present their knowledge effectively, especially to small groups. Executives will find it useful to compile a list of employees who are willing to participate in this phase of the work. Public speaking relative to social welfare matters is an integral part of an agency's responsibility. Board members are, in some cases, equipped and willing to speak; but if requests are numerous, the major part of the burden is likely to fall upon the staff. Hence the development of a panel of speakers from the staff group is advisable.

It is important to have a realistic basis for evaluating the success of a speech. Inexperienced speakers sometimes feel a sense of defeat because the questions following their address indicate that the audience is still ill informed about the subject. Actually the test of success should be this: "Did I arouse in the minds of some of these people a nonhostile curiosity?" Many groups—especially those meeting during the lunch hour—allow a speaker only 15 or 20 minutes in which to present his subject. Groups meeting in the afternoon or evening usually expect a more lengthy talk, but even they do not wish ordinarily to listen for more than an hour. Obviously, in so short a period of time the speaker cannot hope to transmit to his audience all the information he possesses about his own field, nor can he expect to fire his listeners with the same degree of zeal for his program that he himself has developed out of long contact with the problem. His goal is reached if he awakens in his audience a desire to know something more about the subject.

Most of us have had experiences that prove this point. We hear an address on a subject that is new to us. Thereafter, we are astonished to note the amount of information available on this subject in the daily papers and magazines and over the radio. Actually such information was available previously, but we were not conditioned to accept it. The speech awakened our interest, and thereafter we took note of material that had previously been passing by us unnoticed.

In some urban areas the clients of social agencies—particularly the

unemployed and the aged—have organized clubs or federations of a semi-protective character. If these groups request a social agency to supply a speaker, it is important that the request be met. Some instances have arisen in which such groups asked for a speaker, not in order to listen to him, but in order to heckle him. In England heckling has long been accepted as a normal component of the democratic process—especially in discussions relating to the frontiers of social advance. In this country we have not developed quite the same perspective. We tend to resent heckling and to brand the heckler as a malcontent or worse. Actually, no speaker has ever been permanently injured by heckling, and some positive gains are usually achieved. If the speaker maintains his poise and his temper under attack, he at least wins respect and thus may pave the way for improved relationships in the future. And, unless he is defending an untenable position, his responses are likely to dispel at least some of the misconceptions in the minds of his audience.

The deliberate effort to improve the organization of group provisions may be divided into four major steps as follows: (1) collection of facts, (2) analysis and interpretation of facts, (3) formulation of program, (4) education and promotion.

In the foregoing steps the first point relates to the patient assembling of accurate information—historical, statistical, financial, descriptive. In addition, it includes the collection of information which, though not exact in the same sense as financial data, is nevertheless pertinent and important—namely, judgments or evaluations. For example, the view that congregate care in an institution is not the most promising kind of treatment for some children is not an exact and measurable fact. It is, nevertheless, a judgment of genuine importance and should be included with the other more exact kinds of knowledge that serve as guideposts in community planning.

The second step of the process—analysis and interpretation of the facts—has, as its primary purpose, the identification and description of the unmet social needs in the community. In any community, however, it is not difficult to compile an impressive list of needed improvements and needed expansions in existing social provisions. Hence an analysis of needs should be accompanied by an effort to establish priorities among them. Obviously, this involves judgments—judgments not only as to the relative urgency of competing needs, as indicated by the data, but also as to the areas in which there is some hope of making progress. For it is a well-known fact that it is wasteful and confusing to try to promote too many new developments at one time. And it is equally well recognized that some-



times the "climate of opinion" in the community is favorable to one development and unfavorable to another. Hence wisdom in establishing priorities among social needs is basic strategy in community organization.

"Formulation of program" means the development of a concrete proposal to meet an identified need. It may be true and it may be impressive to point out the number of sick people in the community who received no medical care because of their poverty. And it may have educational value to formulate a general proposal, such as "No one in the community should be denied medical care because of inability to pay." But there is greater promise of definite progress if the general objective can be reduced to concrete terms. A memorial to the county commissioners to enlarge the facilities at the county hospital or the introduction of a bill in the state legislature to establish health insurance would usually represent a more hopeful and a more useful contribution than the mere pointing-out of an area of need for which some authority should presumably make some kind of provision.

The fourth step—education and promotion—relates to the efforts to mobilize opinion in support of measures designed to meet identified needs. This is often the longest part of the job. It involves exposition of the need and explanation of the proposed program through all of the means available—the platform, the press, the radio, and the various instruments of visual education. As has been well said, this is "an uphill job every step of the way."

It is clear that the first three of these four steps involve intellectual equipment and discipline that are part and parcel of the professional education of the social worker. Lay groups do not ordinarily have direct access to the kinds of data that reveal the scope and character of social needs. Nor are they usually equipped to engage in the kind of patient toil required to marshal the needed facts and to analyze their meanings. Specialized knowledge is likewise essential in the creative task of projecting concrete programs; for specific proposals must be based on the kinds of information represented by such questions as the following: "How has this community tried to meet this problem in the past?" "What were the strengths and weaknesses of the previous efforts?" "What can be learned from these previous programs with respect either to pitfalls to be avoided or principles to be observed?" "Have acceptable standards been formulated in the field under consideration, and, if so, has the community been prepared, by earlier experiences, to understand and accept these standards?" The social worker who has been soundly educated will know the answers to such questions as these, or will know where and how to find the

answers. Most laymen, on the other hand, would approach the task of program-building without an adequate grasp of the basic background materials. Hence the community organization process, from its beginnings up through the stage of formulation of program, is one that normally requires specific technical and professional contributions from the social worker.

The fourth step, however—education and promotion—is one in which major responsibility should usually be carried by other groups. This does not mean that the task of education, promotion, and the development of public relations is nontechnical; nor does it mean that this work requires no special skill or experience. On the contrary, it has become increasingly clear that success in interpretation and in the development of public relations is largely dependent upon special knowledge and experience. But these qualifications are not peculiar to the social work group. Many groups are at least equally skilful in interpretation, and many are not only more experienced but also have direct access to wider audiences. Among these are the labor organizations, the federated women's clubs, the fraternal and patriotic societies, the men's service clubs, and numerous other groups whose interests and programs relate them directly or indirectly to problems of public welfare. The plain truth is that a welfare program sponsored by social agencies and social workers is at present less likely to receive an adequate hearing from legislators and other elected officials than a program promoted by these other groups, many of which represent large numbers of voters.

The problem of the social agency group, therefore, is to enlist the interest of other organized groups and to galvanize them into action. Usually the most promising approach is to discover first the point at which an organization's program is tangential to social work. Sometimes the identity of interest is very clear, as, for example, in the case of a men's service club that supports a program for handicapped children. In other instances the areas of mutual concern are not immediately clear, as, for example, in the case of a fraternal society that maintains a standing committee on "social legislation." But if relationships are established on the basis of identity of interests, some concrete benefits may result. An illustration is provided by the experience of the social workers of Illinois in promoting child welfare legislation.

Soon after the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, some of the leading social agencies and social workers in Illinois began to advocate action by the General Assembly that would enable the state to qualify for grants-in-aid under the Aid to Dependent Children program. Various

efforts were made to achieve this objective. Data were assembled and sent to members of the legislature. Letters and telegrams were dispatched to state officials and legislators, urging passage of the necessary measures. During the session, individual social workers or small committees of social workers and lay board members representing one or more organizations called upon key members of the General Assembly to press for favorable action. The results of these activities were very disappointing. Certain organized groups in the state were opposed to the adoption of the Aid to Dependent Children program, and their counsels proved more persuasive with the legislature than the representations of the social workers and the social agencies.

During the early period of this agitation, one social worker occupying a very strategic position decided to try to enlist the support of a specific lay group in behalf of the proposed program. This social worker was employed at a state institution for dependent children and was engaged in a child-placing program. She knew that the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary were officially committed to a program of improved provisions in the field of child welfare. She also knew that these two affiliated organizations had large numbers of members scattered throughout the state and that they had state-wide and local committees, many of which were genuinely eager to direct their energies toward a constructive program for children. The natural approach to these organizations was to interest the state-wide committees in the child-placing work of the institution. Since the committees had an obligation to concern themselves with the welfare of children, it was not difficult to develop an interest among the members, first in the cases of specific children and later in the more general needs of dependent children in Illinois. Relationships between the social worker and the two organizations developed progressively through frequent contacts. These relationships were characterized by mutual respect, mounting confidence, and increasing agreement with respect to child welfare needs in the state. As a result, the bill introduced at the ensuing session of the General Assembly to make Illinois eligible for the Aid to Dependent Children grants was sponsored by the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. Although the proposed measure again failed of passage, it received more serious consideration than previously.

In the ensuing biennium, active educational work was carried on throughout the state, and a large number of important organizations were persuaded to indorse and to work for the enactment of the needed legislation. As a result, the General Assembly, at its next regular session, was confronted with abundant evidence that a great many important organiza-

tions in the state strongly favored the Aid to Dependent Children program. The needed statutory changes were thus finally effected in 1941, after nearly six years of effort. Undoubtedly the delay in obtaining the federal aid would have been even more prolonged if it had not been for the careful contacts built up by a social worker who knew the facts as to the need and who also knew that many citizens would rally to the support of the required legislation if they, too, knew these same facts. Moreover, it should be noted that it was a normal administrative routine for this social worker to confer with other organizations concerned with child welfare problems. This routine was transformed into an important activity in community organization because the contacts were developed according to plan and were directed toward helping the lay groups to identify specific means by which they could achieve some part of the broad general objective they wished to serve.

#### POLITICAL ACTIVITY

A word of warning must be interposed at this point relative to the promotional activities of social workers employed in the public social services. In the foregoing illustration the social worker did not engage in activity that could be defined, strictly speaking, as "political." She did no direct lobbying, nor did she seek to secure election of representatives who were committed to the support of the A.D.C. legislation.<sup>\*</sup> She recognized that her position as a state employee precluded her engaging in partisan political struggles.

It has long been recognized that social workers employed in public agencies are in a special position with respect to political activity. A social worker who becomes prominently identified with the candidacy of a particular aspirant for public office may find himself in search of a new position if the opposition candidate is elected. Even where all public employees, including social workers, are protected by a merit system, it is possible for their work to be greatly hampered by the opposition of an official who harbors resentment because his election was actively opposed by public employees. Obviously, social workers are in a strategic position to influence the votes of clients. Those who observe decent standards of professional ethics would, of course, never seek to do so. But candidates for office are often fully aware of this power and are not slow to charge that it is exercised if the social worker assumes a prominent role in advocating the election of the opposition candidate. Thus it is clear that a

<sup>\*</sup> The social workers who did make a direct approach to legislators in the early period of agitation were employees of private social agencies.

decent respect for the preservation of the service he is administering impels the social worker in the public social services to refrain from assuming an outstanding position in pre-election campaigns.

The enactment of the Hatch Act<sup>2</sup> made it compulsory for public employees to refrain from political activity. The provisions of this act, however, are subject to differences of interpretation. There is obviously a wide difference between attending a political rally, on the one hand, and serving as a precinct captain or as county chairman of a political party, on the other. Some authorities have pointed out that the intent of the act was not to prevent the exercise of the normal duties and privileges of citizenship. A member of the United States Senate has said that the extension of the existing prohibition to schoolteachers and other state employees would deprive the country of competent participation in public affairs which no democracy should countenance. In any case, legislation of this type, which undertakes to regulate the conduct of public servants, is likely to be modified repeatedly as the years pass. But, whatever the current statute may provide, the social worker in a public agency must be constantly aware that there is a wide range of public relations activity that may be termed "political" and that the hazards involved are very different at different points on the scale.

Thus overt activity to obtain the election or defeat of a particular candidate is clearly political and will be generally recognized as such. Whether advocacy of a particular bill is political may depend upon circumstances. If a bill is openly sponsored by one political group and is opposed by another, the measure may be as controversial as an election itself. On the other hand, some bills may be sponsored by lay groups that are nonpartisan or bipartisan in character. And, in the field of social welfare, there are often proposals which are nonpolitical in the sense that there is widespread apathy or ignorance with respect to them. In such instances it is often possible for a public welfare employee to speak in behalf of such measures; for the community will recognize that his experience provides him with data for forming a judgment and that he is attempting to share this material with those who have not yet arrived at a conviction concerning the proposal in question.

An interesting question arises also with respect to the public welfare employee who is a member of a group that wishes to support or oppose pending measures that may have a political cast. It is by no means unusual for organized groups of professionals—for example, in the field of

<sup>2</sup> An Act To Prevent Pernicious Political Activity (53 U.S. Statutes 1147 [Aug. 2, 1939]); Amended (54 U.S. Statutes 767 [July 17, 1940]).

medicine—to oppose or support some bill pending in the state legislature. The membership of professional organizations that engage in such activities usually includes persons on the state pay roll. These persons are doubtless protected by the fact that a majority of the members of the organization are not on the public pay roll and that the active efforts with the legislature are in the hands of members not identified with a public service. It would be unreasonable to expect organizations to remain silent with respect to legislative matters falling within their field of competence merely because some members were public officials. On the other hand, in selecting individuals to work on legislative committees, organizations are under obligation to consider whether such service might be a handicap to those members who are employed in government service.

Sometimes the social worker in the public agency does not seek to engage in any kind of political activity but finds that an attempt is made by those in power to force him to do so. An obnoxious form of this coercion is the forced contribution to a political campaign fund. Sometimes the "contribution" assumes an innocent guise, as, for example, the brace of tickets to a banquet or a ball. But if word is passed around that employees will find it very "wise" to buy, the whole procedure falls very little short of extortion. Levies of this type are still all too common, especially in the case of municipal and state employees. Moreover, efforts are sometimes made to induce a public social worker to attempt to influence opinion in favor of the party or of the elected official currently in power. The social worker may be asked to speak publicly in behalf of the administration. More commonly, however, the appeal is less direct, and the request is to insert some type of inclosure in pay envelopes of employees and clients or to give credit publicly to the elected official for improvements for which he was by no means wholly responsible.

It is clear that any elected official or any party that intimidates public employees in this way is guilty of gross misconduct. What the social worker can do when exposed to such treatment is a difficult question. At least one point, however, is clear. The professional obligation of the social worker toward his clients requires that he resist depredations against them. Attempts to collect from clients or to coerce them into political acts against their will must be resisted and, if necessary, exposed, even though dismissal from service follows. Depredations against subordinate employees are almost equally reprehensible, although there is the important difference that clients are usually considerably more helpless in every way than employee groups. The social worker in an executive position should try to protect his subordinates from exploitation. But whether he should resist to

the point of sacrificing his position is a question that must be determined on the basis of related circumstances. Objectionable as it is to see political contributions squeezed out of employees, it may be even more objectionable to risk the installation of a new administration in the department with a resulting lowering of standards of care for clients.

Some social workers believe that employees of private social agencies should likewise refrain from engaging in political activity. They assert that social workers should hold themselves aloof from political controversies in order to be in a position to request members of any party to support a given social welfare measure. This point of view has been advanced particularly in connection with presidential elections; for in several recent presidential campaigns national committees of social workers have worked very actively in support of particular candidates. Since such committees have been organized in support of both major candidates, however, no impression has been created that social workers as a group support one party as against another. The social workers conspicuously identified with these committees included many public employees, as well as persons identified with private agencies. Except in the presidential campaigns, however, there have been very few widespread organized movements among social workers in support of particular candidates. The "political" activities of social workers have in the main been limited to support of specific bills and to public advocacy of more liberal or more efficient administration of existing provisions.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF MUTUAL INTERESTS

Practically every community has a wide variety of interest groups, and most people are identified with one or more of them. Many of these groups have very little in common with one another. Others may be actually hostile or at any rate may be seeking mutually irreconcilable objectives. No universal solvent that will remove these many kinds of barriers has been discovered. But there is a sound basis for believing that the field of philanthropy and social welfare provides a common meeting ground for larger numbers of groups than any other area of community life. The reason is that the concept of charity is common to most religions, both Christian and non-Christian. Since most people have some kind of religious background, belief in the obligation to be charitable is very widespread. Because social welfare programs appeal to this belief, social agencies are often in a position to bring together into one activity many individuals and groups that have little else in common.

Recognizing the religious derivation of the philanthropic drives of many

individuals and groups, social agencies have often found that the cultivation of their relationships with organized churches is of special importance. Document 5-B provides an interesting illustration of an approach to an interdenominational council of clergymen. In this particular case the agency has consistently attempted to promote among church groups an understanding of the kinds of services it is prepared to offer and an appreciation of the way in which church leaders can encourage the utilization of these services. Among the results produced by these efforts are the following: (1) the agency's services have been extended to people in need of skilled counseling who were previously unaware that this service was available; (2) clergymen and other church leaders have acquired an understanding of professional social work that has enabled them to recognize good professional standards; (3) church groups have increasingly identified with social work programs and have become effective interpreters of social work objectives; (4) increasing numbers of clients have developed an attitude toward social agencies comparable to their attitudes toward the public schools and other institutions that offer specialized services they wish to utilize. Perhaps all these observed gains could be described as a fitting-together of groups that are separated denominationally, and otherwise, into support of an activity that brings them into alignment with one another at least on one level of group life.

Although church groups perhaps provide a particularly promising area within which social agencies may undertake to exercise leadership, there are many other kinds of groups among whom comparable successes have been achieved. The creative element in the process is the identifying of the common base upon which joint development must rest. Some agencies have discovered this base in unexpected ways. A member of the board of a hospital reported an interesting experience he encountered in serving on the budget committee of the local community chest. In his private business—he was manager of a large factory—this man had been disturbed by persistent cases of absenteeism among his employees. Inquiries had revealed to him that many of the absences were due, not to illness, but to domestic crises. In reviewing the budgets of the member-agencies of the community chest, this man learned for the first time that certain local agencies were offering services to nondependent families. He had previously believed these agencies served dependent groups only. He saw at once that prompt reference of some of the absentees to these services would not only enable the employee to return to work but would also promote stability in family life. The agencies, of course, welcomed the opportunity to offer help not only to this group of employees but to others



as well. Thus, one man's experience in rendering a civic duty as a member of the budget committee was the means by which a large number of industrial employees and executives became potentially related for the first time to the groups sponsoring family-counseling services.

A somewhat similar development occurred in a community in which the executive of an important social agency was appointed to serve on one of the subcommittees charged with reviewing the budgets of the family welfare agencies for the local community fund. This executive had access to an imposing body of statistical and case material which his agency had compiled in the course of its work with men rejected by local draft boards in 1942. He was able to introduce some of this material into the discussions of the subcommittee. Serving with him on the subcommittee were two other social workers and several persons who were members of boards of other local social agencies. As a result of their discussions, the subcommittee recommended a plan for integrating the services of several local agencies into a comprehensive plan to provide prompt and diversified service for the rejectees. This plan involved enlisting the co-operation of both the local draft boards and the social agencies operating in the fields of health, family welfare, and child welfare. Although some of the recommendations were not carried out, a reasonably comprehensive service was established. Thus several important groups joined forces to achieve a common objective, largely because representatives of these groups were brought into a close working relationship with an individual who knew the facts about a new opportunity for service in the community.

The perennial task of raising money for social agencies likewise opens channels of communication with other local groups. Private social work in urban communities is at present supported chiefly by community chests. In their annual drives for funds the chest organizations recruit hundreds and, in large cities, thousands of volunteer solicitors. These solicitors suddenly find themselves in need of information that will enable them to answer the questions raised by prospective donors. In an effort to meet this need the chests in some cities have asked executives and other social workers in their member-agencies to serve as secretaries of various campaign groups. This plan has produced important results. In general, the social workers have found that they could give the volunteer campaigners a much better understanding of social needs and social programs than most of them have had before. The interests thus developed sometimes lead the volunteers to identify with the community's social work on a more lasting basis, possibly by accepting membership on an agency board or committee or by assuming posts of greater responsibility in the cam-

paign organization. The workers in the agencies, by accepting responsibility in the community drive, are thus placed in a position to develop public understanding of welfare problems by the direct person-to-person method.

#### CASE COMMITTEES

A case committee is a group of lay citizens whose function is to offer advice on social treatment. As a rule, the committee is asked to consider specific cases and to evaluate various plans for helping the clients to face and solve their problems. In some agencies, however, the committee studies broad problems (such as eviction, unmarried parenthood, etc.) rather than specific cases and tries to suggest general policies. Although the one approach is inductive and the other deductive, both presumably make the same kind of contribution to the community organization process.

Differences of opinion exist, however, as to the advisability of using case committees. Some social workers believe that the professionalization of social work has developed to a point such that lay points of view are not very helpful either in developing a plan of social treatment or in formulating general case work policies. Others believe that the effort involved in organizing and operating a case committee is fully justified by the positive benefits gained. A major purpose of any case committee is educational. The agency utilizes the meetings of the committee to interpret its work and to familiarize the members with social problems in the community. But this educational process works both ways. The reactions of the lay members to the material considered at meetings may provide the agency with an index of the stage of development which the community has reached in its views on social problems.

If consultation on specific cases is limited exclusively to the professional group, it is easy to lose sight of the level of social thinking in the community. Opinions expressed by members of case committees thus tend to act as a corrective in the agency by keeping the staff aware of the points of view entertained by representative laymen. Case committees can likewise be of great value in contributing to the policy-making process of the board. The members of a case committee usually acquire not only a knowledge of specific cases but also an understanding of general problems that hamper the treatment program. Their interpretation of this material to the board may be very effective in helping the governing body to clarify its thinking and to decide upon a course of action.

In some agencies the case committee is composed exclusively of board members. This may be a good arrangement in an organization in which the

board members have a very inadequate understanding of the program. Ordinarily, however, it is better to seek a broader base of participation. The board may wish to facilitate contact with the case committee by appointing one of its own members as chairman. But it is usually desirable that most of the members be selected from the community at large.

It is also desirable that the case committee be broadly representative of the various social, economic, religious, and racial groups in the community. Each member should be regarded as a potential interpreter of social welfare in the group with which he normally associates. Moreover, if the agency is to gain an adequate view of community opinion, it is essential that this sampling of opinion be broadly based. It is often useful to include on the committee an individual who has had previous experience as a professional social worker but is now otherwise occupied. If no such person is available, it may be helpful to select someone who has had a long experience as an agency board member. One individual with a background of experience may prove invaluable on a case committee; for such a person is much more free to argue warmly in favor of a standard or a policy than the paid professional worker who assists the committee in the discharge of its function.

At most meetings of the committee the cases will be summarized orally by the social worker who assists with the work of the committee. Occasionally, in the interest of introducing new points of view, it is advisable to invite another member of the staff to present one of his cases. In either event the summary of the case should be carefully prepared in advance. This summary should be limited to the essential facts. If technical material has to be introduced, such as diagnostic terms in medicine or psychiatry, or legal terminology, the summary should set forth this material in nontechnical language which all members can understand. The summary should terminate with a list of the questions on which the agency wishes to obtain the advice of the committee. These questions should be limited in number—probably to two or three major issues. It is seldom practical or productive to lead the committee into discussion of minor problems, such as the details of domestic management in a family.

Agencies that operate case committees must be prepared to follow their advice. No group of adults is willing to convene regularly unless it is clear to them that they are performing a function. If the agency is unwilling to trust the judgment of the committee on a problem pending in a certain case, it is better not to present that case to the committee.

It is clear that in one or two meetings each month the agency cannot hope to introduce the members of the case committee to the entire range

of social problems confronting the community. Hence, in the administration of the affairs of the case committee, it is desirable to adopt some principle of selectivity. If the agency as a whole is actively seeking certain objectives, the material presented to the case committee should be related to those objectives. Thus, for example, in a certain middlewestern city, the family welfare agency sought for a number of years to obtain protection for its clients and others by advocating the enactment of a measure to regulate the interest rates charged by small loan companies. During this period, attention was drawn in case committee meetings to instances in which clients had suffered because the legislature had failed to provide adequate protection. Since similar material was being presented to board members and to members of other committees, there was presently a body of informed opinion in the community. As a result, the desired legislation was ultimately obtained. Although it is poor strategy, in a case committee or elsewhere, to hammer constantly at one problem and only one, it is nevertheless essential that there be frequent recurrence to the major objectives of the society. The social worker who works with the case committee is under obligation to see that the cases selected provide periodic reinforcement of the agency's objectives in community organization.

Up to the present, case committees have been used more widely in private than in public agencies. Unless the statutes impose limitations or the policy-making officials object, there should be no reason, however, why public agencies could not likewise make use of case committees to promote educational work in the community. In some places where case loads per worker are sufficiently low, such committees have been used by public agencies with good results. In one eastern city, when unemployment was very widespread during the 1930's, the public agency was subjected to bitter criticism because relief clients were using their automobiles. The public press took up the cry and demanded that automobile license plates be removed from the cars of clients as a condition of receipt of relief. The executive of the agency organized a case committee of citizens to review the circumstances of clients who owned motor vehicles, and soon many new facts came to light. One client needed a car, for example, to transport a sick wife several miles to a clinic where she was receiving treatment three times each week. Another man was able to pick up odd jobs of carpentering by cruising about the city and thus not only earned enough to meet nearly half of the family's minimum budget but also sustained both his skill and his morale. As a matter of fact, in practically every case, the committee approved the recommendation of the case worker that the

client be permitted to retain his license plates. The publicity given to the committee and to its work promptly dispelled the criticisms to which the agency had previously been unjustly exposed. Even more important than this immediate accomplishment was the growth of a more understanding attitude toward the unemployed and toward the programs designed to meet their needs. The abatement of hostility toward any constructive social program is always an important gain; for it paves the way to acceptance and approval of the principle of community responsibility.

#### VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Another administrative area that is inextricably related to an agency's program of community organization is the field of volunteer service. Here again there is difference of opinion. Some agencies make no effort to recruit volunteers; for they believe that very few significant functions can be entrusted to them in organizations that seek to provide high standards of professional care. Other agencies devote great effort to the recruitment, training, and utilization of volunteers and are convinced that the resulting gains are well worth the price paid.

A review of agency experiences in this country suggests that there have been periodic fluctuations in the attitudes of agencies toward volunteer workers. In an early day the work of private agencies was conducted exclusively by volunteers. The activities of these volunteers were at first supplemented, and later all but supplanted, by the work of paid employees. The development of professional schools for the education of social workers was followed by an interval that has been called "the period of the glorification of the trained worker." More recently there appears to have been a swing back in the direction of the wider use of volunteers. The impact of war is only one of the causes of this change. Improved standards in the training and supervision of volunteers have convinced many agencies that the supplementary services provided by a volunteer group are well worth the demand they make upon agency time and resources.

The actual service given by volunteers is usually not the most significant function they perform. Their major contribution, like that of all lay groups organically related to the agency's program, is to interpret the work of the organization. As they grow in experience, volunteers may also gain and help to promote an understanding of the social needs in the community. Like the members of case committees, they also provide the professional staff with a close-up view of lay reactions and attitudes. In addition, of course, they frequently render services for which it would otherwise be necessary to make provision in the agency's budget. And, finally,

a competent and experienced volunteer group affords a promising recruiting ground, not only for agency board membership, but also for lay committees needed in the community for various social-planning and promotional activities.

Agencies that decide to develop a volunteer service should recognize in advance that they are entering an exceptionally difficult field. Disgruntled volunteers may prove to be a perennial source of disaffection in the community. It is therefore essential that the agency develop its plans with great care and that it assign one of its mature and experienced workers to the task of guiding the volunteer program.

Sometimes agencies are importuned by organized groups, such as social clubs, to accept the entire group as volunteers. The agency will, of course, not immediately acquiesce. It will suggest rather that a series of conferences be held in which both parties attempt to discover whether a mutually satisfactory arrangement can be worked out. The agency should state at once that it will not accept volunteers more rapidly than it can absorb them into meaningful activity and that this will obviously involve some rearrangement of the existing assignments of staff members. It should also make clear the conditions under which it accepts volunteers. The conditions required differ somewhat from agency to agency, depending upon the function of the organization and its status in the community. But, in general, most agencies will expect volunteers to agree to at least the following minimum requirements: (1) definite amounts of time must be given on definite days and at the agreed hours; (2) in case of illness or absence from town, the volunteer does not send a substitute but agrees to notify the director of volunteer service in advance, if possible; (3) the volunteer agrees to take an orientation course offered by the agency; (4) the volunteer agrees to observe the policies of the agency; (5) the volunteer agrees to accept the supervision of the professional staff member in charge of the volunteer service.

During the progress of negotiations, it is desirable for the director of the volunteer service to interview each prospective volunteer individually. Some agencies ask each applicant for volunteer service to fill out a simple blank, indicating previous experience and interests. At the time of the initial interview, or soon thereafter, the agency should ask the volunteer to sign an agreement relating to the service that is to be given. A letter addressed to the executive of the agency should serve this purpose adequately. The agreement is not legally binding, of course, and should not appear formidable. Its chief purpose is to set forth the volunteer's commitments in writing with sufficient clarity to preclude any possibility

of later misunderstandings as to the obligations assumed. The letter should state specifically: (1) hours and days of service; (2) arrangements with respect to substitutes in case of unavoidable absence; (3) reports required, if any; (4) accountability to the professional supervisor; (5) days and hours of the orientation course. It is also desirable to make clear at the outset that successful volunteer service is not the route to full-time paid employment in the agency. Sometimes volunteers hope that they may obtain professional employment after they have proved their usefulness in the organization. Agencies safeguard themselves against future troubles if they indicate from the start that their employment policies do not permit them to engage workers whose preparation has been attained solely through volunteer service.

The orientation course for volunteers provides an unusual opportunity to equip a lay group with information that will enable them to interpret the social services in the community. In the interest of emphasizing the distinction between professionally educated social workers and volunteers, it is desirable to call this course an "orientation" course rather than a "training" course. The content of the course will vary, depending upon the program of the agency and the functions to which the volunteers will be assigned. In most cases the following outline would represent the minimum content for such a course:

1. The kinds of social problems with which the agency deals
2. The program of the agency
3. The administrative routines that must be observed
4. The relationship of the volunteer to the professional supervisor of the service
5. The relationship of the volunteer to the client group
6. The specific functions to which the volunteers will be assigned

Some agencies have found it advisable to cover only the minimum essentials in the orientation course. Then, after a period of service, an additional series of meetings is held, in which an effort is made to provide further education. The content of these later meetings can then be shaped to answer questions that have arisen in the course of the agency's experience with the volunteer group.

At the opening session of the orientation course, it is desirable to have a statement from the chairman of the agency's board. His appearance indicates to the volunteers that the agency attaches importance to the function they are preparing to fulfil. The content of the chairman's statement will depend, of course, upon his understanding of the program. The least he can do is to express the interest of the board in the volunteer service. Some chairmen, however, are very well informed concerning the history of the agency and its functions in the community. In such instances the

entire first session may well be turned over to the chairman; and at later meetings the professional staff may fill in with any essential materials he may have overlooked in setting forth the general framework within which the agency operates.

In indicating to the volunteers the problems with which the agency deals, it is often useful to make clear also the kinds of services *not* offered. This provides an opportunity not only to outline the services that are available in other agencies but also to suggest some of the needs for which no provision has as yet been made. If some of the volunteers are to be used in jobs that bring them into direct contact with clients, it is imperative that there be thorough discussion of their obligations in this area. Sometimes volunteers are disposed to extend services to clients on their own initiative and from their own resources without consulting the professional staff. The impulse of the volunteer to satisfy his own emotional needs by doing something concrete and immediate about a situation that distresses him must not, however, be permitted to interfere with the agency's plan of social treatment. Friendly services extended to clients by volunteers are often constructive and useful, but it must be made clear that these services are offered only after consultation with the professional staff. A forthright statement with respect to this policy during the period of orientation may prevent destructive conflicts later.

If the initial orientation course is to consist of eight to ten sessions, the professional worker in charge may want to use two or three supplementary speakers. The administrative routines of the agency can be explained, for example, by the executive or by some staff member designated by him. If the course is to include material with which members of the agency's board are familiar, it is often useful to secure the participation of such members. For example, a doctor who is serving as a member of the board or of one of the agency's committees might be asked to present material with respect to local problems of public health. Public officials and employees of other social agencies are also often willing to participate, as, for example, an officer from the juvenile court or a visiting nurse. In general it is safe to say that an orientation course for volunteers should be carefully restricted to the material which the volunteer needs in order to function understandingly and efficiently in the going program. The basic content should be presented from more than one angle in the interest of repetition and review and should, wherever possible, be elucidated through generous use of illustrative materials.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of a volunteer service is the problem of assignment. It is not fair to the client group to assign volunteers to



functions that should be performed only by qualified professional workers. On the other hand, unless the volunteers are given duties that seem to them significant and useful, they are likely to lose interest. If an agency plans to assign a volunteer to a routine task, such as distributing statistical cards, it is only fair to say so at the outset. In this way the volunteer may choose to withdraw before the agency has invested time and effort in preparing him for service. Whatever the assignment, it should preferably be one that enables the volunteer to observe the services of the agency, so that he acquires information that equips him to interpret the service and the needs in the community.

Before initiating a program of volunteer service, the agency should undertake a careful job analysis with the assistance of the entire professional staff. This participation may prevent the development of hostility toward the volunteer program among the staff members—an obstacle that has in the past proved to be serious in some volunteer programs. Moreover, the staff members know the details of the operating program, and most of them will therefore be able to identify functions that may appropriately be intrusted to volunteers. A successful study of operations thus provides the agency with an essential resource—namely, a description of the specific pieces of work that will be available in making assignments of volunteers.

The marked increase in the use of volunteers as a result of war activities has stimulated the publication of a number of very useful monographs dealing with the operation of volunteer services. Several of these monographs suggest specific functions to which volunteers may profitably be assigned. Hence social agencies in all fields—family welfare, child welfare, health, and recreation—have access today to a much wider range of useful guidance than has previously been available.

#### CLIENT GROUPS

The most direct interpretive effort in which a social agency may engage is in relation to the client group. Clients, like any other large group, include some persons who, because of ignorance or defects of personality, will not respond to these efforts. On the other hand, there is an abundance of evidence that agencies have registered many conspicuous successes in giving to clients an understanding and an appreciation of their program. Contributions and refunds from former clients, letters of appreciation to the agency or to the readers' column of the daily newspaper, are among the tangible proofs of these accomplishments.

Direct person-to-person contacts are generally acknowledged to be the

most productive avenues for interpretation. For this reason an agency's relationships with its clients, quite apart from their importance in treatment, are worthy of very careful cultivation. An analysis of these relationships would involve consideration of the recognized and approved methods of contact both in case work and in group work—a task beyond the province of this text. It is clear, however, that the impressions and attitudes on which clients base their evaluations of an agency result in part from administrative activities. The care with which the executive selects his personnel and the standards of training and experience he requires are, of course, factors which ultimately have a fundamental influence upon client reactions. Continuity in relationships is likewise of basic importance. In one important public agency a study of records revealed cases in which the family, over a period of a year, had been assigned consecutively to as many as ten or twelve different case workers. It would not be surprising if these families looked upon the agency as a very unstable organization. On the other hand, to retain a worker in a family in which relationships are developing badly may be equally destructive. Most people encounter personalities, from time to time, to whom they find it difficult to adjust. Supervisors who are alert to this contingency will find that the transfer of a case to a different worker will often improve relations with the client. But, in general, frequent changes will not induce the kind of confidence that will help the client to appreciate the significance of the agency's work in the community.

Consideration for the comfort and convenience of clients is likewise an element in administration that counts heavily in developing responsive attitudes. Reception rooms and waiting-rooms should be simple, comfortable, clean, and orderly. The clients have come to the agency seeking a professional service. They should be received in an atmosphere consistent with this purpose. The planks stretched between empty barrels on which clients were obliged to sit for hours during the early depression days of the 1930's were not calculated to inspire respect among the unemployed for the public social services.

Delays in themselves undermine respect and confidence. Long hours of sitting in waiting-rooms may be abridged by working out an appointment system. Postponement or cancellation of interviews, without previous notice, fosters lack of confidence in the integrity and efficiency of the organization. Executives and supervisors should be at great pains to send out the call for staff meetings well in advance of the scheduled date and to refrain from imposing duties at short notice such that employees are obliged to change their engagements with clients. Worst of all, perhaps, is

the failure to have checks or benefits ready for distribution on the appointed date. Sometimes the responsibility for such occurrences is due to matters over which the agency has no control, in which case a straightforward explanation should be given to the client. If the agency's stage of development is such that delays may be expected to occur periodically, it is best to warn the client in advance so that he may shape his plans accordingly. His resentment is then likely to be less sharp, since the occurrence was not wholly unexpected.

The director of an important public welfare bureau said recently: "Integrity of character and purpose is the best publicity." What he meant was that mistakes inevitably occur, but that the agency with a good reputation can survive such mishaps. Fidelity to promises, courtesy, efficiency, promptness, good humor, and honesty are the factors that ultimately determine whether the majority of the client group react favorably or unfavorably toward the organization. Good will and good faith characterize the attitudes of most administrators and employees of social agencies; but unless effective and integrated administrative provisions are developed, it may be hard for the client group to recognize that these are the dominant drives in the organization.

Although every agency, consciously or unconsciously, does a job of interpretation in its contacts with clients, some organizations have attempted to work out formal methods of supplementing the routine contacts. One bureau charged with care of the aged organized social clubs made up of clients. In this particular state, several proposals to provide old age pensions were receiving wide publicity. Although the club meetings were primarily social in character, the program occasionally included informal discussions or question-and-answer periods in which matters of current interest were taken up. At some of these meetings the old age pension proposals were submitted to analysis, and consideration was given to the kind of program that would appear to merit support.

Group work agencies, of course, constantly make use of social affairs to help the members in attaining an understanding of social programs and social problems. Settlements, in particular, have been conspicuously active in this area. Many of them have helped their neighbors to develop organizations that are specifically committed to civic, rather than to social, purposes. Such groups, whether social or civic in purpose, have studied such questions as garbage disposal, traffic control, housing inspection, and kindred matters related to the needs of the neighborhood. Often they have gone past the study period and have actively sought to obtain needed improvements for themselves and their neighbors.

The effort to relate client groups to the community organization process does not always originate in social agencies. Sometimes the client groups themselves take the initiative. Some of these self-organized groups of clients have occasionally proved to be very difficult and unruly. This has been especially true with respect to organizations made up of the able-bodied unemployed. Experience suggests that there must be emotional acceptance of these groups on the part of executives and subordinate social workers in the agency if any basis for understanding is to be established. Emotional acceptance does not mean, of course, that the social worker identifies with the group. It does mean respect, tolerance, courtesy, and a recognition of rights guaranteed in the Constitution itself—the right of assembly and the right to protest. If attitudes within the agency are critical or hostile, nothing better than neutrality—accompanied perhaps by police protection in the office—can be expected.

In one sense competent administration of the agency's services is the key to success in the community organization program. The client group feels most directly any lapse in the quality of the organization's performance. Their discontent is transmitted in many ways to others in the community, including members of the governing body. No one believes it is possible to please every individual in a large case load—but the confidence upon which the exercise of leadership depends must, in the long run, rest upon evidence of satisfactory dealings with those whose contact with the agency is direct and personal.

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DOCUMENT 5-A

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 131, AS AMENDED<sup>3</sup>

WHEREAS, Harold Pomeroy, state relief administrator, has issued a verbal order prohibiting employees of the State Relief Administration from pursuing legislative activities in the California legislature on their own time and in their capacity as private citizens; and

WHEREAS, Said order specifically forbids any meetings with legislators for the purpose of discussing any and all legislation; and

WHEREAS, Said order further prohibits the sending of communications or petitions to legislators concerning pending legislation; and

WHEREAS, Said order arbitrarily limits the exercise of fundamental political rights and liberties; and

WHEREAS, Said order is un-American and undemocratic in that it abridges the fundamental liberties of free speech, free press, and free assemblage and the right of petition; and

WHEREAS, Our democratic form of government can only survive so long as the citizens engage in free discussion on public questions; and

WHEREAS, Said Harold Pomeroy has threatened to dismiss any State Relief Administration employee who disobeys said order; and

WHEREAS, The said Harold Pomeroy in the issue of said order has acted contrary to the Constitutions and laws of the United States and of this state; and

WHEREAS, In connection with the question of what constitutes an improper activity on the part of an employee of the State Relief Administration, the attorney-general of this state has ruled as follows:

" . . . In reply, the term 'Improper Activity' is not susceptible of a definition which could be applied in determining in each particular instance whether an activity of a political character were proper or improper. The propriety of political activity must in a large degree depend upon the circumstances of the particular instances.

"It is generally admitted to be not only the privilege but the duty of an American citizen to be politically active, and it has not been supposed that employment in state or municipal service, either civil service or otherwise, would prevent or prohibit an employee from the exercise of political

<sup>3</sup> *Assembly Daily Journal (California)*, Wednesday, April 21, 1937, pp. 42-43.

right, including a reasonable and well-ordered activity in behalf of those political principles which he favored, or in support of those candidates whose success he believed would best contribute to the general welfare. Whether an employee in a particular instance exceeds the limits indicated must be determined as above indicated by a consideration of the facts and circumstances bearing upon the particular activity.

"The propriety of political activity in a given instance does not depend upon the question whether such activity of the employee accords with the views of the principal, or even with the views of the political party represented by all or a majority of the office incumbents . . . "; and

WHEREAS, It is inconsistent that said Harold E. Pomeroy has himself lobbied on state time both on the floor of this assembly and elsewhere; now therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the said Harold E. Pomeroy is hereby requested to reverse any and all orders and directions made by him relative to the exercise of the rights of any citizen, whether employed by the state or not, and that he refrain from dismissing any employee for petitioning the state legislature in person or otherwise; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the governor be and he hereby is requested to relieve said Harold E. Pomeroy of his duties as state relief administrator, if the practices condemned by this resolution are continued.

## DOCUMENT 5-B

### THE CHURCH AND THE FAMILY WELFARE AGENCY<sup>4</sup>

In all sincerity, I am interested in gaining your support for and co-operation in a program, the like of which St. Paul has never seen in the past. It is my firm conviction that if you clergymen and we social workers work together in closer harmony and co-operation many people in this community can be assisted in leading a more *personally satisfying* and more *socially useful life*. If you will carefully weigh and analyze the words—"more *personally satisfying* and more *socially useful life*"—I believe you will agree with me that they are, for the most part, in accord with those of a phrase more familiar to you—namely, *leading and living a Christian life*.

Before proceeding further, permit me to review a little of the history of family welfare work in St. Paul. Since 1892, when the Associated Charities was organized by Rev. Hastings Hart, Rev. Smith, and other civic-minded citizens of St. Paul, privately supported family welfare agencies have tried to do more than just relieve the suffering caused by social and economic ills. The churches and their leaders have been strong allies in this work. To be sure, methods of procedure were hazy and often faulty, but the aim of prevention was outstanding.

Later when the Associated Charities became the United Charities, the leadership in developing sound family welfare programs for this community was assumed by the United Charities and its board and committee members. The responsibility for the major portion of the city's relief program, important as it was, did hamper the preventive and corrective aspects of the agency's program. However, progress was observable. Parenthetically, it might be said that the relationship of the church to this family welfare movement was at times obscure.

In 1933 with the advent of federal relief, it became obvious that St. Paul would have to, and indeed should, develop a strong public relief agency. The United Charities merged its entire organization with that of the Board of Public Welfare so that by 1935 St. Paul was known as having one of the best public welfare departments in the United States.

By 1935 it was apparent that there would be a need for strong public agencies for a good many years to come and that this country probably

<sup>4</sup> Address given before the St. Paul Ministers Council by A. A. Heckman, general secretary of Family Service, St. Paul, Minnesota, on Tuesday, October 20, 1936.



would never return to the day when relief would be a responsibility of privately supported welfare agencies, as it was prior to 1932 and 1933.

There seemed little justification for the United Charities to continue its merger with the public agency or to continue using privately subscribed funds for a purpose that obviously had come to be accepted as a responsibility of government. The staff, board members, and friends of the United Charities were faced with the question as to the place, if any, for a privately supported family welfare agency in the community's welfare structure.

To some of us, devoting our full time to welfare activities, it seemed necessary to face and solve, if possible, several problems. First, the numbers dependent on relief had been growing rapidly ever since 1927 and 1928. Unemployment, of course, has been a big factor in this growth, but a closer scrutiny of the relief rolls led us to believe that a marked revival in employment will not reduce the numbers on relief or the financial cost to predepression levels. Things have happened to people and to our social and economic structure that employment alone is not likely to solve. Trades, once flourishing, are now obsolete; individuals, once confident and sure, are, after years of unemployment and dependency, broken in spirit. Accumulated indebtedness is likely to throw many newly re-employed men out of employment because of garnishments and other financial-legal entanglements and discouragement resulting from an inability to meet immediately all the demands of creditors and current living expenses. Strains resulting from unemployment have left their marks on husbands and wives, fathers and mothers and children, so that once happy families frequently are found torn with friction and strife. All of you are familiar with these many problems. Shall we, as citizens, sit back and accept these consequences and the resulting social and economic costs? Can something be done to repair some of the damages? Can some damages be prevented? Can the length of time some people need to be dependent be shortened and others be helped to avoid becoming dependent? These are some of the questions that were raised when we were considering the future of the United Charities.

After reviewing the services available to citizens of St. Paul, it appears that two groups have recourse to good social welfare services, namely, those on relief and those financially able to buy needed services. Their reasons for wanting or needing these services may, in many instances, arise from entirely different causes, to be sure. There is a large group of people on small wages who have no such resources available to them. Can

the United Charities meet some of the needs of this group? We believe we can do something about some of these problems.

It was decided that, starting November 1, 1935, the United Charities would devote its efforts toward assisting people with some of the problems I have just mentioned. To do this it was believed that it would be necessary to have a program adequately staffed with competent, well-trained persons. Experience indicated the need to limit services to those who really wanted assistance with their problems—in other words, not to try to force our services onto people. With these prerequisites we believed it possible to assist people with such problems as the following:

Situations in which persons are having difficulties in adjusting their family life to reduced incomes, changes in vocation, and other personal and family misfortunes which force drastic and unexpected adjustments.

Problems of indebtedness, garnishments, and legal entanglements.

Situations where desertion, irregular marital status, court action, and other severe family frictions are having a disturbing effect on the family and particularly on young children.

Problems of health requiring severe readjustments within the family group.

Problems of budgeting and homemaking, nutrition and special diets. These may be in relation to management of income and spending habits, particularly as they influence the family's standard of living.

Conflict situations between husband and wife, parents and children.

Difficulties arising out of emotional conflicts and personality disturbances.

Problems involving personal reactions of hopelessness and tension, threatening the individual's capacity to handle his difficulties.

Problems of adolescents who are having difficulties in connection with their economic, vocational, or family adjustments.

Situations related to children who are affected by adverse conditions in the home and environment and where there is still hope of a satisfactory adjustment, thus avoiding the breaking-up of the home and referral of the children to a children's agency.

Problems about which persons or social agencies may desire consultation or guidance in behalf of individuals or families in whom they are interested.

Vocational and employment problems.

A staff consisting of eight well-trained, mature case workers, together with a psychiatric case worker, a religious case work consultant, an attorney, a legal case work consultant, a home economist, and a vocational guidance consultant, has been secured. The agency's name has been changed to "Family Service" in order that our services might be as free as possible from the stigma of charity, thus encouraging those not in need of financial assistance to use the agency for assistance with their problems. Our offices in the Wilder Building have been equipped and arranged to insure comfort and privacy for our clients and to offer a professional atmosphere likely to be found in the offices of attorneys, doctors, and other professional men.

From no clients in November, our work has grown until we are now serving more than 800 families and individuals.

Perhaps I can give you a better picture of our work by dividing the 800 situations handled in August into groups of problems which clients are bringing to us in quest of assistance. It is difficult to make any arbitrary division by problems; for this tends to imply that people have social problems that can be set aside in catalogued compartments and that distinct, well-defined services can be applied to each social ill. It is not so easy as that. Each individual presents a different problem requiring a different approach. In each instance the social problem usually affects the entire life of the individual and in different ways for different persons. The most that we can do is to try to make a division along broad lines of underlying or basic problems.

Roughly, then, these 800 clients from a standpoint of problems, might be divided into the following groups: 35 cases involving problems of personal relationships, including such difficulties as domestic friction, personality disturbances, parent-child problems, alcoholism, etc.; 144 situations involving problems relating to adjustments of the client to his environment, in which would be included vocational guidance, recreational needs, housing problems, business problems, relationship to church and social groups, and the like; 638 cases involving financial and legal entanglements. Probably it is needless to point out that in the 638 cases just mentioned there were indications of a great many problems of personal relationships and adjustments to environment. It is believed, however, that assisting these clients to cope with their financial and legal entanglements will greatly relieve these other difficulties, which may then entirely disappear.

In addition to these 800 cases, a consultation type of service was rendered to private citizens—doctors, pastors, businessmen, housewives, and members of other social agencies, all of whom were trying to be of help to individuals not known to Family Service. For example, a clergyman came in the other day to seek advice which might help him assist a family of his parish with their domestic problem. He did not think it wise to refer the family to the agency and believed that because of his relationship with both parties involved in the marital disagreement he might be of assistance to them. He was given advice and help in understanding causes for domestic difficulties and methods which he might use in assisting the two parties. In another instance the pastor wished to check his plans for a young girl who had come to him with her problem involving a moral question. This pastor wanted to be sure he was doing all he could to help this

girl overcome her difficulty. A businessman sought advice in regard to his brother-in-law. He did not wish financial assistance from the agency, nor did he want any other service than simply advice as to whether the plans he had in mind would be for the best interests of the family and would tend to assist them in regaining their economic independence.

These services may seem insignificant. To some of us they seem worth while because, after all, many case work techniques lend themselves to use in our day-by-day relationships—whether it be with our families or in our business and professional work. One of the fundamentals of case work is the individualized approach, coupled with an attempt to understand and respect the individual, to the end that he might be assisted in developing his own capacities to cope with the problems of life. The fore part of this statement is an American principle, in theory at least, basic to all our relationships. The more that people learn how to get along with others in day-by-day relationships and to help them solve their problems before crises arise, the less will be the need for intensive, long-time treatment by social agencies and the less will be the intense suffering and social losses.

I might add here that the majority of family situations under our care do not require financial assistance in the form of relief. Our clients, for the most part, are employed at moderate to small wages. During September, 1936, we spent \$2,400 for material relief, this being the largest sum spent in any month since November, 1935. In this figure are included items which a few years ago would not have been looked upon as relief. In other words—not bread-and-butter expenditures as such. However, these expenditures were for items which, in our opinion, will be of assistance in helping the family shorten the length of time they need to be dependent or will assist them in remaining independent of long-time public relief.

Perhaps a few brief case histories will better illustrate some of the problems which people bring to us and the kinds of services that we are trying to render. We are not successful in all instances, but in many we do believe we have been of help to our clients. The first illustration will be from the group of 35 cases involving problems of personal relationships.

Mrs. H., a patient of a physician in private practice, was referred to Family Service because she was depressed and had threatened, as well as attempted, to commit suicide. She was not able to pay this private physician for his services; and, although he was willing to continue treating her and serving as a consultant to Family Service, he did not feel he could devote the time to Mrs. H. that she needed. Furthermore, her relationships with her family and her economic situation were complicating the picture. Because of these limitations this doctor called upon Family Service.

Mrs. H.'s husband had committed suicide about two years earlier, because of worries over financial matters. As far as the public is concerned Mr. H.'s death was accidental. Mrs. H., however, knows that it was suicide and has come to believe that she, through demands for money and failure to recognize the serious financial situation of the family, was the real cause of his death. Mrs. H.'s sole income is \$30 per month Mothers' Aid (county funds). Several events in her earlier life—unpleasant and antisocial for the most part—have made Mrs. H.'s relationships with her parents, brothers, and sisters somewhat strained and have added to her emotional distress by arousing a feeling of guilt.

We have been attempting to help Mrs. H. understand the situation in which she finds herself, to explain to her that probably she was not the cause of her husband's death and that she has a responsibility to make a home for her children. Attempts are being made to prepare her for a suitable occupation in order that she may increase her income. Arrangements are being made for her to have some social life to occupy a portion of her leisure time. She has been encouraged to return to her church for spiritual advice and comfort, as well as for social contacts and recreational opportunities.

Mrs. H. has required a great deal of attention and help in understanding the events that have taken place in her life and her relationship to them. The physician and case worker are working together, trying to help Mrs. H. gain a new hold on life so that she may continue caring for herself and her children.

While it cannot be said that Mrs. H. has completely overcome her difficulties, she has made progress. She appears to be happier and to have taken a new lease on life. She is progressing in her vocational training. She has a wholesome social life. Threats and actual attempts at suicide have not occurred for a number of months. This has required time and money on the part of the agency. Whether the physician or social worker has been chiefly responsible for the apparent improvement cannot be determined. The important thing is that when the doctor and social worker worked together with Mrs. H., each contributing his special skills, improvement seemed to take place.

Mr. K. and his problems illustrate to some extent the second group of cases and at the same time point out the way in which different kinds of problems are interwoven and the need for adapting an individualized approach to each situation.

Mr. K. came to the agency for assistance, ostensibly with his financial problems. He had been working steadily throughout the depression at a

small wage but had gradually built up an indebtedness which had reached the point of nearly \$800. Mr. K. had been walking the floor nights, unable to sleep, worrying over his indebtedness. He also was afraid of garnishment, which might lead to the loss of his employment.

During the case worker's discussions with Mr. K., he kept reiterating his desire to be honest. He repeatedly refused to consider scaling down his indebtedness or going through bankruptcy, in spite of the fact that his present income would allow him to make only very small payments, if any, on his indebtedness and was scarcely more than enough to support his family. He had been depriving his children of food in order to make payments on his debts, with the result that they were rapidly losing weight and presenting health problems. Owing to his loss of sleep and worry, he became irritable and was finding his home life less satisfactory. Quarrels with Mrs. K. were not infrequent.

Mr. K. kept insisting that he wanted to be a "good provider" for his family and wanted them to have opportunities which were denied him. During the course of our contacts with him it developed that he had been frustrated in a number of his earlier ambitions and had suffered the loss of his father at an early age, which necessitated his stopping school and becoming the head of the family. Upon coming to this country from Germany he married. His in-laws looked with disfavor upon the marriage, feeling that he was inferior to their daughter, thus cutting off any family connections here. His work is of a dirty, menial type, though his ambition was to become an accountant. In his attempts to be a "good provider" Mr. K. frequently purchased items which were beyond his means. He found himself an easy victim for clever salesmen. For example, once when in need of a heating stove for his small house he discovered that the latest thing was an oil heater of a certain type which "looked much better than the old-fashioned stove," and of course "he wanted his family to have the best." While the cost was more than for ordinary stoves, "easy monthly payments could be arranged." Everything went along very well until Mr. K. was unable to pay his bills. Then he began to find that in the eyes of his neighbors and creditors he was not a "good provider" but an incompetent man. This set up a series of conflicts which brought about the problems presenting themselves when Mr. K. came to the agency for assistance. With an understanding of the man, the things he was striving for, and the methods he was using in obtaining these ideals, it was relatively easy to help him understand his own behavior and attitudes. As a result, progress had been made in liquidating his indebtedness and in removing some of the tension. We now find that Mr. K. is sleeping at nights, giving some

attention to his children, who are rapidly gaining weight, and that the domestic friction seems to have disappeared. It looks as though Mr. K., probably for the first time, understands the need for relating his ideals to the practical situation. He now comes in to discuss his needs—not with the idea of getting Family Service to tell him what to do or not do but rather to discuss his plans pro and con so that he can arrive at some sound decision.

Mr. P., a young man twenty-three years of age, with a limited education but a great deal of ambition and desire to study and improve himself, came in for advice regarding employment. Mr. P. had had little experience and was not using good methods in applying for work. Our vocational guidance consultant has advised with Mr. P. and has guided him in his job-finding endeavors. The results are that he found temporary jobs which met his immediate needs and later secured a permanent job with a future.

Mr. B., a Negro boy, left an orphan, found it impossible to complete his college course in one of St. Paul's colleges. He had been playing evenings for a dance band in beer parlors, earning a few dollars and associating with a group and in an environment which were not to his best interests.

A check of employment opportunities revealed a demand for Negro medical technicians in southern hospitals. Mr. B. did exceptionally good work in college in chemistry, biology, and allied subjects. With the aid of Family Service he is completing an eighteen months' course for medical technicians and stands well up toward the head of his class.

Mr. S. asked for assistance with a business proposition. He had worked out many details and could at least convince anyone that he understood what he was attempting to do. Private financial interests could not be enlisted because of the lack of security for any loans which might be made to him. Family Service decided to assist Mr. S., since there was a possibility of his gaining his economic independence and the amount involved did not exceed the cost of one or two months' relief allowance. Furthermore, it was known that Mr. S. was an honest, ambitious, and imaginative man.

Mr. S. not only removed himself from the relief rolls but repaid Family Service for funds advanced, earned a nice little profit, and made himself so serious a competitor of a larger business concern that they offered him a year's contract at a salary plus commission.

In the third group of cases Mr. L. might be cited as an example. He was referred by his employer with the threat that one more garnishment would mean the loss of his employment. Mr. L. and his wife have worked closely with our case worker and home economist, with the result that their in-

debtedness is rapidly being reduced and they are understanding a little more about home management, budgeting, and planning. Mr. L. is so enthusiastic about our services that he has referred several of his friends to us. His interpretation of our work to his friends is better than we could hope to make to them.

In closing I would like to cite still another kind of service which we believe is of a distinct value to the community. Federal prison and parole officials use Family Service almost exclusively in investigating St. Paul references, home conditions, and work opportunities for prisoners. Through such investigations we are able to give them unbiased information to use in considering parole applications.

But what has all this to do with the church and family welfare work? It is our belief that social problems are not limited to nonchurch members or to those on relief. We believe that you men in your daily work are faced with numerous situations that are difficult and baffling, with which you would like assistance.

As social case workers we are more aware than ever before of the importance which religion and the church assume in the lives of many individuals. We believe that, once your profession and ours reach an understanding of each other's aims and goals, we can be of greater assistance to our fellow-citizens. We should be able to accomplish things, working together, that probably could never be accomplished by either group alone or working against each other.

Perhaps I can give you a better idea of the point I am trying to make by telling you of an experiment which a group of clergymen and my agency have been conducting for several years. This group of seven or eight clergymen represent a certain Protestant denomination. They became involved in this experiment largely because they had been thinking about this subject of social work and its relationship to the church. They recognized that relief alone was not enough and that many times, when administered by the church, relief blocked other services which the church was eager to render. Incidentally, we still feel for the most part that we are in an experimental stage.

We started out with the assumption that in this day and age it was impossible for the church as a denominational organization to supply the material needs of life and that this responsibility rested upon the community as a whole, working through governmental agencies, local, state, and national. We believed it the duty of all of us to keep informed on such needs and the public administration provided to meet these needs. We believed, as individual citizens and as groups of citizens drawn together in a



common purpose, in which the welfare of mankind was of great importance, that we should act to secure the best kind of administration possible and to assist in finding ways and means of preventing recurrences of crises such as the ones we are in or just passing through.

It seemed to us that we should be more concerned with assisting individuals to develop their own capacities to cope with many of life's problems. We need to understand our neighbors and to assist them by means other than material ones. (It is easy to give material things but hard to give of one's self.) In short, we were determined to find out how the church could assist social work with the many nonmaterial problems being presented to it by its clients and how social work could assist the church with nonmaterial problems occurring among its members.

We recognized each other as belonging to professions which are interested in people and in helping them make the most of every opportunity so that they may lead a socially useful and personally satisfying life. Each of us turns to the medical or legal profession when those with whom we are working come to us with health or legal problems. Why not turn to the religious and case work professions when those we are trying to help come to us with religious or social problems? Equally important was the need for those not on relief, not baffled by serious social ills, to recognize the importance of understanding the causes of some of these ills and the dire results to human happiness that come from a self-righteous attitude which leads to passing by on the other side of the road.

Time will not permit relating all the experiences we have had. However, I do know that many people are better men, women, and children today because we have worked together trying to help them help themselves, maintaining all the time an objective, but sympathetic, view of their problems and behavior. Domestic friction has been overcome in some instances, and in others progress has been made with problems of alcoholism, delinquencies, and other antisocial and asocial conduct. These same pastors are coming to us for consultations regarding individuals and families they are trying to assist. More serious situations are being referred to our agency. We are turning to these pastors for consultation regarding the spiritual problems of our clients. Naturally, the work of this committee was limited entirely to members of that particular denomination and to those who give that faith as their preference. Some of these pastors tell me that their experience on the committee has given them a better understanding of human beings and their problems and thus has helped improve the spiritual work they are doing. In turn, a certain change has taken place among some of the lay members of the church in that they

evinced more concern about the individual as a human being than about the pleasure and feeling of goodness received from giving baskets or relief with little thought of the individual receiving such gifts.

Social case workers, in turn, are appreciating more than ever before what can be accomplished in many instances by a wholesome development of the spiritual life of the individual along with the treatment of his social and economic problems. Social workers also are more aware of the number of wholesome recreational and social activities available through the church, and its program has opened up new resources for the clients of social workers.

In closing I would like to offer you a proposition, breaking it into two divisions. You may accept either or both of them. I suggest you think about them before acting.

First, I would like each one of you to refer to our agency a family or individual to whom you think we might be of assistance, keeping in mind the types of services I mentioned that we are able to render. If you have no one to refer, perhaps you would like to avail yourself of an opportunity to consult with our agency regarding some problem with which you are helping some individual or family. We will work closely with you and see if, together, we cannot be of greater assistance to these people.

Second, I would like a committee of five or six ministers picked from this council, representing different denominations, to work with some of us on the staff of Family Service in an effort to find out where, when, how, and under what conditions the two professions can work together in the interest of better family life.

## DOCUMENT 5-C

### HOW CAN JEWISH COMMUNITIES BE ORGANIZED?<sup>5</sup>

It is obvious that our present forms of community organization are the outgrowth of and reflect characteristics of American Jewish life and for this reason differ considerably from the organizations of Jewish communities in Poland, Lithuania, or other European countries from which we, or our forebears, have emigrated. It might be of interest to note briefly some of these essential differences. In the first place, the United States has no ethnic or minority group structure of community organization. Immigrants and descendants of immigrants of fifty different nationalities are widely dispersed throughout the country and for the most part are becoming integrated as an American population who are increasingly less conscious of the national or ethnic origins of the original immigrants from whom they are descended. Unlike minority ethnic groups in European countries or even in the Province of Quebec in this hemisphere or in South American countries, all Americans use a common language, with bilingualism, such as that of the French descendants of Louisiana, the Germans of Pennsylvania, the Swedes in Minnesota, becoming a diminishing phenomenon. Similarly, for the Jewish group, Yiddish is rarely a language of expression for the children or grandchildren of Yiddish-speaking immigrants.

Within the Jewish, as in all other American, groups there are different levels of cultural interests, attitudes, and behavior. Current differences among the descendants of Jewish immigrants are likely to shrink to the vanishing-point in the third generation. They have been considerably reduced in the second generation. Jewish population native to this country is now reaching its majority. When it functions as the majority of the adult group, it is going to exert a profound influence on the characteristics of our Jewish communities. Consider our eighteen-to-thirty-five-year age group, a large proportion of whom are now in war service. In their experience, in their cultural interests, and in their views on Jewish questions they resemble each other much more than does the over-thirty-five age group in our communities. I do not mean to imply that there are no religious or cultural differences in the younger Jewish population, but I am certain

<sup>5</sup> Excerpts from an address by Harry L. Lurie, executive director of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, delivered at the Central Atlantic States Regional Conference of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, March 19, 1944, Trenton, New Jersey.

that the differences are less extreme. At present, with leadership still in the hands of older elements, there are more marked cultural and ideological differences.

I would say that what we have in mind by "Jewish community organization" is in a sense synonymous with what we mean when we talk about "Jewish unity," i.e., a basis of agreement among all types of Jews on the policies and programs that are required to meet Jewish needs, or, in other words, organizing a common program to meet problems which affect all Jews. Two sets of factors are determining the degree and character of Jewish unity or Jewish community organization. These may be said to be working as internal and external forces. The internal factors within the Jewish group which automatically created a co-ordinated Jewish community recognizing itself as a distinct group and living for the most part as a separate community have been and will continue to be influenced by the processes of democracy working within the community as a whole. Our contacts and association with other groups with whom we live and with whom we share our economic, political, and social interests affect our culture and our communal life. This may explain why the essential characteristic of Jewish community organization in western Europe, in the Soviet Union, and, par excellence, in the United States is organization through "interest groups." It is for this reason that the common denominator for the Jews is now so difficult to define. We use the term "coreligionist," but even that term has lost some of its meaning. What, specifically, is the "coreligionism" of a scholar at the Lubavitcher Yeshivah, a Jewish agnostic, or a Jewish member of the Ethical Culture Society?

No matter how much we talk about "cultural pluralism" as the basic principle of American life, the fact is that the maintenance of group cultures is being sharply influenced by the tendencies for a common American culture which is taking place at the same time. A well-knit and co-ordinated Jewish community can exist only on the basis of an awareness and an acceptance of major differences between Jews and other elements of the American population. So recent an observer as Rabbi Brickner in his tour of the Army and Navy camps came back with the report that, so far as the men in service are concerned, the awareness of similarities among all types of servicemen is very much greater than an awareness of religious or ethnic difference. Here, at least, is a group of the American population in which prejudices, if we are to believe the observers, are being lessened rather than intensified.

Internal forces which furnish a positive basis for Jewish organization are naturally affected by external pressures which are primarily of a negative

character. These external forces which have been arising outside of the Jewish community have caused profound changes in the nature of American Jewish life. The complex of overseas and domestic tendencies which has fostered and magnified anti-Semitism and has created untold Jewish misery and Jewish problems today must be acknowledged as a powerful force which is influencing the character and structure of the Jewish community. The internal forces springing from a desire to maintain Jewish religious culture and Jewish group associations are now being supplemented by external pressures and group problems which call for community organization on the broadest possible basis of participation.

What we are concerned with, therefore, is to try to understand the nature of Jewish community organization as it is evolving in this country and is seeking to relate itself to current Jewish problems. Events have, for the time being, answered the perennial debate as to what was the common element for over-all Jewish association. Anti-Semites have defined the term "Jew" for us and have forced the inescapable conclusion upon all of us that Jewish community organization is the organization of all Jews to develop common instruments to deal with common problems.

It is to be expected that our current attempts at Jewish community organization would at first be channeled through existing Jewish interest groups, that is, through our educational groups, our religious groups, our fraternal associations, our Zionist bodies, our labor associations, and other groups organized within the community. Many of these interest groups have attracted new participants or have reawakened interest on the part of former participants, and we may expect that all of them will play a more important role in Jewish community life in the future than they have in the past. But no one of them has itself become the instrument for central community organization. Unless the religious institutions can proselytize the nonreligious or the indifferent, they fall short of complete community membership. Economic and cultural differences limit the centralizing powers of fraternal associations, veterans' bodies, and other forms of association. The continuation of differences of philosophies and viewpoints between Zionists and non-Zionists makes it impossible for one or the other of these ideological groups to become the central community agency for all Jews.

Thus far it is only through philanthropy that we have been successful in bringing all Jews who have common problems into a single basic association. It is for this reason that the federations and welfare funds in the last fifteen years have taken on additional importance as instruments for achieving central communal action. Within a single welfare fund

budget can be brought together agencies serving reformed, orthodox, conservative, labor, Zionist, non-Zionist, Hebraic, Yiddishist, and other elements as a testimony to the centralizing capacity of the welfare fund movement. It is of interest to note that in the United Jewish Appeal, through philanthropy, we have achieved co-operation between Palestine and overseas programs, whereas in the American Jewish Conference, where the approach is political action, we have failed to achieve a basic platform for Zionist and non-Zionist bodies.

The logical question to ask at this point is whether organization for defense work and programs dealing with anti-Semitism would not furnish a more direct means to central Jewish community organization. There is much to be said for this theory, and it explains why in recent years our member-agencies and the council have put so much emphasis on the desirability of achieving unity in the civic-protective field. We considered it essential to achieve national unity as a requisite for full unity in the local community. We have been able in the program which is today being discussed in the meeting of the Community Relations Advisory Council to utilize the state of civic-protective unity achieved locally in at least fourteen cities as a lever to attain our objectives. But no matter how optimistic we may be about the promises for civic-protective unity, we must recognize that we are still in the initial stages of our attempt and that sharp ideological differences and group problems are likely to act as brakes on the rate of acceleration.

It is for these reasons that community organization through "philanthropy" is still the most practical approach. I want to stress the fact that I do not mean philanthropy in the older sense. We are not organizing the Jewish community on an over-all basis because we are primarily concerned with the problems of the Jewish poor. We are organizing for community welfare on the basis of our own self-interest, and we are using our capacities to deal with domestic and overseas problems as a basis for bringing into association all the elements of the Jewish community. It is for this reason that we are rapidly going beyond the field of family relief, child care, and hospital service to cultural and Jewish educational programs and to the organization in federation and welfare fund cities of services which deal with vocational guidance, economic adjustment, public relations, and defense services.

Since in our new community welfare program we attempt to deal with problems which are common to all Jews and are establishing programs which have unlimited application to everybody in the community, it is essential that the forms of our organization should undergo considerable

change. The most successful community agencies are the ones which are built up through the active participation of all Jewish elements. This is what we mean by "democratic communities." They not only reach all elements of the population that are organized but attempt to represent all elements. The more representative and the more democratic the organization, the more effective it is in securing the co-operation and participation of all Jewish elements. This is not an easy task to achieve, and new principles of administration and procedures must be worked out to guarantee effective results. An organization consisting of the well-to-do and the modest contributors, of reformed, orthodox, conservative, Zionist, non-Zionist, labor, and all other varieties, must be an organization which none of these elements or no combination of these elements can dominate to the dissatisfaction of one or more of the other elements whom we wish to continue to attract in our community organization. That is the nature of democratic organization and of the voluntary associations which Jews have formed. It is this new situation which requires not only thorough and enthusiastic participation of the lay leadership but skilful and competent professional personnel, especially for cities sufficiently large to be able to pay for such service.

We are in the beginning of a period of a new form of Jewish community development. We do not know what changes in general, political, and economic factors are going to affect our Jewish community life. We cannot forecast what the future holds for Jews in Europe, in Palestine, in the United States. We know that there are new problems and that the world is changing. We know that we must look toward these new horizons. We know that we must become conscious of all the factors impinging on our lives and that there is a great need for intelligence, for study, for investigation, and for statesmanship in every one of the cities where Jews live.

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## CHAPTER VI

### IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS FOR STUDY

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THE community organization process can be carried forward successfully only by being constantly related to sources of factual material. For this purpose the case records of the social agencies provide a very rich mine of data. Admittedly, the primary purpose of a social case record is to facilitate and promote social treatment. But this does not mean that the record cannot also be used to contribute to an understanding of community needs.

Naturally, there is great variation among case records. Perhaps this is as it should be. No one wishes to police out of case records such creativeness as may find its way into them. There is no essential conflict, however, between creativeness in treatment, on the one hand, and controlled recording, on the other. "Controlled recording" is a phrase that sounds more formidable than it actually is. It means merely that there is advance agreement relative to certain key items that will be entered in the record and uniformity with respect to definitions of terms. In the absence of controlled recording, studies of community needs usually prove to be difficult and disappointing; for the needed facts will be found wanting in many records or will be entered in such a way that the exact meaning is obscured.

Let us assume, for sake of an illustration, that there is a desire to know what the community's need is for an improved program for the early diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis. Most case workers enter in their records some information about tuberculosis encountered in their families. But in the absence of advance agreement, many of the records will not contain all the information desired. For example, it may be desirable to know how many of the victims were formerly employed in industries that provide physical examinations for their employees. Or information may be needed concerning the length of time elapsed between discovery of the disease and cessation of employment. Hence, in the interest of conserving effort, some definite decisions must be made in advance as to the specific information sought.



A similar situation prevails among group work agencies. Recording is at present much less standardized in group work than in case work. Nevertheless, it is obvious that group work is potentially an exceedingly important source of information concerning social problems, not only because of the large numbers served by such organizations, but also because those enrolled in group work activities include many persons not known to other types of social agencies. In the study of tuberculosis referred to above, for example, it would be valuable to know the numbers of boys and girls who dropped out of group work activities and went into employment because the breadwinner of the family developed tuberculosis. It would also be important to know how many had had some kind of health education and understood the basic principles of health conservation. The leaders of organized groups often have, or could easily obtain, such information, but at present the incentive is not strong. There are two reasons for this situation: (1) lack of agreement among group work agencies as to the purposes and methods of recording; (2) doubt as to whether patient recording will actually some day contribute to a solution of community problems.

Some headway is being made by group workers toward overcoming both of these handicaps. It is an unusual conference today that does not devote at least one session to an examination of this question. These discussions relate not only to purposes and methods of recording but also to the potential uses of the resulting data. The skepticism as to the ultimate uses of the facts is not hard to understand, since at present much of the recording in all fields fails to pay adequate dividends.

There should be no misunderstanding of the purpose of controlled recording. The purpose is neither to regiment the agencies nor to impose an impossible burden of fact-collecting. Obviously, the numbers of facts that may be gathered about any family and its environment are legion. Among these multitudes of facts each worker tends to select for recording those that seem to him significant. This kind of individualism almost destroys the possibility of any wide coverage of the community with respect to any one specific problem. The object of controlled recording is merely to obtain advance agreement as to a few kinds of information that all agencies will co-operate in collecting. Nor does such agreement imply that this particular set of facts will be collected indefinitely. Presumably the emphasis will change from time to time as the community becomes aware of new areas in which its information is deficient.

Let us return to the illustration used above—namely, that all agencies in a certain community agree to collect for one year a certain set of facts

regarding cases of tuberculosis encountered in the client group. At the end of the year a body of convincing information would be available that would be extraordinarily useful in community planning in the health field. Moreover, the data would have the kind of dramatic potentialities so important in a program of interpretation, because the statistical findings could be supplemented by a variety of concrete case illustrations. Any group of social agencies in possession of such a body of evidence would be in a strong position to make clear to the community the scope and character of one important problem and might reasonably hope to obtain some kind of group action with respect to it. Moreover, the data would not become immediately obsolete. In the case of those kinds of problems that do not shift rapidly in character, a reliable set of facts will serve as a basis for interpretation and planning for a considerable period of years. For example, the study of needs and facilities in New York City for care of the chronic sick,<sup>1</sup> completed some years ago, has been repeatedly referred to in ensuing years in discussions and plans relating to the problem.

Controlled recording on a community-wide basis implies that some agency will take the initiative in setting the movement afoot. Logically, this responsibility should fall upon the organization that has been created to promote social planning in the community. This would mean, in most urban areas, the council of social agencies. Regardless of where this responsibility rests, however, it is important that final decisions take into account the best professional thinking and experience available. Concretely, this means that those engaged in case work and group work activities, no less than the executives of the agencies, should be given an opportunity to participate in the formulating of plans. Those in direct contact with the client group are the ones who must be depended upon to record the desired facts. It is desirable that they be brought into the planning, if only to insure their recognition of the potential importance of the added entries they will be asked to make in the records.

Moreover, the social workers who are in direct contact with clients should be in a favorable position to suggest useful types of inquiries. The extent to which their contribution in this respect will be valuable depends, in large measure, upon the attitude they bring to their jobs. Most social workers today have what might be called a "professional" attitude toward their work. That is, their approach is characterized by this type of question: "How can I help this family to achieve its desire for a more satisfying life?" "What resources can I introduce that the family might wish

<sup>1</sup> Mary C. Jarrett, *Care of the Chronic Sick in New York City* (1933).

to utilize?" Everyone would agree that this represents a commendable and responsible professional approach. But it is better if this attitude is supplemented by another, which might be represented by such questions as these: "At what points in the treatment of this case am I balked by elements that may be generalized—that is, elements that might be encountered in many cases?" "At what point do I encounter a need for treatment resources that do not exist in the community?" "At what point do I find that treatment is ineffective because of an unsatisfactory co-ordination of existing treatment facilities?" "What elements in this case might be used, without injury to the family, to promote public understanding of a social need in the community?" The case worker or group worker who goes about his daily tasks with these queries in mind is likely to have very valuable suggestions to make concerning the types of facts it would be useful to gather on a community-wide basis. Moreover, the social worker who has developed this type of creative and questioning attitude should be permitted by his supervisors to enter some of these reactions in his case records. This provides material to which reference can be made when the agency is contemplating an investigation or when it is asked by outside sources whether, in the course of its work, it has encountered evidence that the study of a given problem might prove to be fruitful.

A small committee is needed to develop interagency plans for uniform recording. If the committee operates under the council of social agencies, professional services can usually be made available to assist in the task. The widespread participation of the practicing social workers in the community is best attained in one of two ways. If there are organized groups of social workers in the community, the planning committee may discuss the project with them and invite their suggestions. Usually, however, broader coverage may be achieved by working through the functional social agencies.\* Through conference with each agency, arrangements should be made to have the proposed undertaking discussed in staff meeting. Suggestions obtained in this way must then be correlated by the central planning committee. It is desirable that the small planning committee include representation from each functional field that will be expected to co-operate in assembling the data and that at least one member be selected from the practitioner group who will collect the information from the clients.

\* Doc. 6-A provides an illustration of a broadly based plan for a self-study of group work agencies. Widespread participation was encouraged, both in the planning and in the collection of the data. Although emphasis in this study was mainly on agency functions, provision was made (e.g., Point 5 [f]) for examining factors that would indicate unmet community needs.

## COMPLAINTS

Complaints also provide a fruitful source of information about social needs. Agencies should, therefore, be alert to follow through carefully on every complaint received. Of course, many complaints are groundless. Some rest upon misinformation or misunderstanding, and some emanate from neurotic personalities. But this is by no means always the case. Often the complainant may have a bona fide basis for his dissatisfaction. In some instances investigation of the complaint may reveal a weakness in the administrative structure that can be remedied. If that is the case, correction of the defect has important implications, for it removes a potential source of misunderstanding that might, over a period of time, influence the attitudes of a large number of clients toward the methods used by the agency. If an administrative defect is discovered in this way, it is good policy to acknowledge the shortcoming, to thank the complainant, and to indicate to him the steps that have been taken to improve the situation. The very fact that the agency is seeking to improve its service is an element that will influence the client in whatever interpretation of the agency he may feel called upon to give in the group with which he associates.

Complaints do not always relate, however, to administrative weaknesses. They may disclose a genuine need which the agency is unable to meet. Such complaints, of course, provide important data for use in the community organization process. It may be that the need disclosed is one that can be met by some other agency in the community. If that is the case, the implication may be that co-ordination of services among the agencies is faulty or that understanding of the services available in the community is inadequate. One objective of social agencies is to have their functions understood. Almost any citizen can explain to a newcomer in the neighborhood where and how to obtain assistance from the police department, the fire department, or the school system. Social agencies aspire to have their programs equally well understood. Perhaps this cannot be accomplished until the number of agencies is reduced and the pattern of intake is simplified; but in the meantime individual cases of ignorance or misunderstanding must receive attention, and their implications should be noted. It must be admitted parenthetically, however, that facts bearing on this difficulty have been known for some time and efforts have been made to correct the situation,<sup>3</sup> but thus far without conspicuous success.

<sup>3</sup> One such effort was the publication of a vest-pocket guide for free distribution to policemen, firemen, teachers, and other public servants who come into contact with large numbers of people who need help. The guide did not accomplish its purpose, partly because the intake policies of the agencies were too complex to be stated in brief terms and partly because the intake

Among the verified complaints, there will be some that reveal areas of need for which no provision exists in the community. These areas are not always easy to identify. Frequently the real underlying needs are concealed both in the complaint and in the mind of the client by needs that are immediate and obvious. For example, a client may upbraid an agency for registering him in its placement files and then failing to produce a job for him. A careful analysis of this complaint may show that the job was an immediate need but that underlying it was a much more basic need—namely, the need for facilities to train unskilled men for occupations in which there is some hope of sustained demand for their services. Or a housewife may declare that the agency does not grant an adequate food budget. Here the fundamental problem may be ignorance and lack of training in domestic management. The solution may be, not an increase in the food budget, but rather an instructional service that seeks to equip inexperienced women with knowledge and skill that will enable them to discharge their household responsibilities more effectively.

A single verified complaint would seldom justify an agency in concluding that it should ask the community to give prior consideration to the problem identified. First, a broader factual basis is required and judgments must be formed as to the urgency of the need as compared with other known gaps in community provisions. For this reason it is advantageous to have all complaints pass through the hands of one employee, if possible. A complaint may, in the case load of one worker, appear to be an isolated instance. But if a number of similar complaints are submitted by other workers, the combined total may clearly indicate that the problem is sufficiently widespread to merit more intensive study. Moreover, an analysis of all complaints by one staff member insures greater uniformity of interpretation. Complaints that are at base identical in character may easily be presented as different problems merely because of differences in phraseology or differences in the backgrounds of those who assess them.

Complaints do not always emanate, of course, from clients. Sometimes board members, supporters of the agency, neighbors, friends or relatives of clients, or interested citizens may be the source. Even though the complaint is unjustified, it may not always be possible to allay the dissatisfaction of the complainant. Something is gained by going into the matter,

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policies changed frequently and rendered the guide obsolete. Another approach is to establish a central information and complaint bureau manned by persons thoroughly familiar with all social resources in the community and with the intake policies of all agencies. After such a bureau is in operation, a considerable task remains in interpreting its functions to the community at large and in building up the habit of consulting it.

however, even if the only result is to raise a doubt in the mind of the critic as to whether he is right. Occasionally such complaints appear in the "readers' column" of the newspaper. It is good policy for the agency, after investigating the facts, to address a reply to the complainant. If an anonymous signature has been affixed or if no address has been printed, the agency may ask the editor to forward its communication to the proper destination. Some agencies, in addition, write to the "readers' column" and ask that their reply to the complaint be published. There is considerable basis for questioning the wisdom of this policy. Often the only result is to give further unfavorable publicity to the organization; for uninformed readers are seldom able to grasp the entire problem from the casual reading of a printed letter. The major purpose of acknowledging a printed complaint is to establish, if possible, a personal relationship with the person who wrote it. If such a relationship is established, the agency may be able to learn some useful facts and to establish a basis for some person-to-person interpretation.

#### CLUES PROVIDED BY NONLOCAL AGENCIES

The initial clue that certain developments are needed in the community does not always come from a local source. Many agencies have direct contacts with state and national organizations that are eager to give them the benefit of their wider experience. In private social work there are national agencies in most of the functional fields. Most of these agencies are supported, at least in part, by their local member-agencies throughout the country. A good many of them have field representatives who visit the member-agencies periodically and stand ready to provide advice and assistance. Many of them publish journals, house organs, statistical summaries, bulletins, and the like, which are sent regularly to all member-organizations. In the public field the relationship between the local agency and its state or national headquarters may also be of an advisory character but is, in most jurisdictions, more likely to be supervisory. The local public agency is created by law and is frequently required to conform to the policies established by a state authority. Various federal agencies are also vitally interested in the work of local public agencies. Very often the relationship is indirect—that is, the federal agency approaches the local agency through the medium of the state supervisory office. But even in such cases the federal agency usually includes the local organization on its mailing lists and makes available to it the material it publishes for the guidance of local administrators. Thus both private and public agencies

have frequent access to data from state or national sources that may have important uses in local community organization.

Let us assume, for example, that a private family welfare society is facing a need to redefine its responsibilities in the community. Until recently this organization handled more than half of the family relief work in the locality and was the only nonsectarian agency engaged in a program of family case work. Now it finds that the relief problem is largely in the hands of public agencies and that some of these agencies are developing a case work service of the type formerly sponsored solely by the private field. This suggests the desirability of pioneering in new areas. But it is not easy to determine just what these areas should be. In urban centers particularly, the pattern of services is already distractingly complex. Hence it is a real problem to stake out a program that does not conflict with the plans of other organizations and that does promise to contribute constructively to the development of community provisions. At this point the experiences of other communities may prove to be suggestive and useful. Problems similar to the one the agency is facing have arisen and are currently arising elsewhere. What solutions have been effected in these other localities? What new programs are under way and how are they progressing? Very often the material sent out by state and national organizations answers questions of this type. Sometimes this material may describe and evaluate the services in progress of development. But sometimes the local agency must search for the clue in the columns of statistical tables. If statistics are given by localities, one purpose is to enable local communities to compare their operations with those of other jurisdictions. These comparisons may suggest a new line of development. For example, if the figures show that in a selected group of 60 private family welfare agencies, 52 per cent of all cases are nonrelief cases, this fact may raise a question as to whether, in the community under consideration, there has been sufficient exploration of the need for a case work service for nonrelief families and individuals.

From the standpoint of community organization, the major contribution of material sent out by state or national agencies is to raise questions rather than to answer them. The fact that a certain program seems to be progressing satisfactorily in one place is no proof that it is needed or that it will succeed in another. But it is a genuine benefit to receive a promising suggestion. The suggestion is used as a point of departure for studying the local situation to determine whether a need exists which might be met through the development of a similar program locally.

## OTHER SOURCES

Of course, there are other important sources from which agencies may obtain suggestions. Professional journals of social work constitute one of these sources. These journals do not publish consecutive series of statistics, such as may be obtained from state and national supervisory or functional agencies, but they often do present résumés of significant experiments and studies. Many agencies, both public and private, maintain reading-rooms and subscribe for these journals in order to keep abreast of the developments they report. Conferences are likewise an important medium for the interchange of experience. Large state and national conferences are usually organized into functional divisions in order that those who attend may concentrate upon the meetings that are likely to be devoted to developments in their own fields. Conferences uniquely devoted to a given field, such as child welfare, are often organized on a regional basis and include agencies from several states. Such conferences have distinct advantages; for they make available the experiences of practitioners who have been facing similar problems, but within a different framework of legal and statutory provisions.

It is also worth noting that social workers can often profit by scrutinizing the experiences of certain allied fields—particularly the fields of public health and public education. New undertakings in medical-social service have sometimes been prompted by studying the social component in problems of medical care and the administration of public health services. The concern which social work has evinced regarding the so-called "problem child" and regarding such manifestations as truancy, retardation, malnutrition, and the like has sprung from an examination of social needs that come to light in the public school system. Social services, including the visiting-teacher movement, have been instituted to meet the needs thus revealed.

## PASSIVITY IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

The social worker can never afford to lose sight of the fact that the community belongs to the people who live in it. Hence it is seldom wise to impose a new program upon the community until favorable sentiment for it has been cultivated. Sometimes it is possible to obtain outside funds with which to operate a new service during a demonstration period. Usually it is best not to initiate the demonstration, however, until there is evidence of local interest. Otherwise there is always the risk that the new undertaking will not long survive the expenditure of the outside funds. A



tangible evidence that local citizens approve of the proposed service is a contribution of some sort on their part. Care must be taken, however, to distinguish between the local contribution that reflects a real desire for the service and the one that is given only because it brings a sizable grant into the community. It is the responsibility of the social worker to help collect the facts that may inspire a bona fide concern to improve or expand local services. These facts relate, not only to the volume and character of the local need, but also to the experiences of other communities that have embarked upon comparable undertakings. Preachment alone seldom convinces a community that it should introduce new methods or new programs. Documented data must be used, first to evoke interest and then to crystallize sentiment. When this point has been reached, the prospect that a new program will survive the demonstration period is immeasurably improved.

Occasionally there may be areas—for example, depressed areas where substandard conditions have long prevailed, as in certain coal-mining districts—that have lost the habit of responding to a challenge. In such places local interest may be difficult to evoke, and even very modest local support may be impossible to obtain. The choice then is between imposing a program for which there is no visible local support, on the one hand, or accepting indefinite continuance of substandard conditions, on the other. In such instances a good case can be made for introducing the program even in the face of local apathy. But such communities are the exception. In most American communities there is a leaven of thought and vision which will respond to sincere overtures. The problem is in large part one of assembling the right facts and of presenting them convincingly.

The so-called "passivity" theory in social case work has its counterpart in a passivity theory of community organization. According to this point of view, the function of the social worker is to listen and to learn. To bring in a program from the outside is paternalistic, and to promote aggressively the adoption of a program already cut to pattern is an unwarranted interference with local prerogatives. The function of the social worker is to wait until the community develops an awareness of its own needs; he then stands ready to answer questions or to assist if and when his assistance is sought.

The passivity approach to community organization has some features that recommend it. Respect for local autonomy is in line with an old and honored tradition of American life, and, conversely, dislike for interference on the part of remote authorities stems from long-cherished attitudes and hard-won lessons. Moreover, it is undoubtedly true that a local-

ly inspired program has a better chance to sink its roots deeply into the soil than one that is imported. Likewise, social workers who make conspicuous attempts to manage rather than to teach are certain to meet resistance, whether they operate with individual cases, with groups, or with communities. On the other hand, to sit passively by until the community awakens to its needs and responsibilities is practically equivalent to a denial that a professional method of community organization exists. The social worker is a teacher—particularly in his community organization relationships. His job is to help the community to achieve an awareness of its needs and a desire to meet them. His teaching activity is much more difficult than that of a classroom instructor; for he does not deal with a selected group and his material often has to face the opposition of vested interests. But he does not wait for the community to achieve an education by means of some unidentified process of osmosis. He deliberately tries to place material before the community that will help it to become aware of its responsibilities and opportunities. Moreover, he seeks to adjust his material to his audience. He begins, not where he is in his own thinking, but where they are in theirs. If the community is still at the basket-giving stage of relief administration, he does not start by promoting a program of case work at the personality level. He seeks rather to lead the community to a realization that basket-giving is less effective than family budgeting. If he succeeds in that effort, he may then be ready to move on to a new area in which there appears to be promise of response, as, for example, a consideration of the health problems of clients and of the agency's opportunities with respect to them. In other words, he follows a well-established precept in teaching by seeking always to develop new methods and new interests out of the elements of knowledge with which the group is already familiar.

#### STUDIES AND SURVEYS

A basic premise underlying the discussion in this chapter is that fact-gathering for purposes of community organization is a continuous process. It is also true that progress may often be accelerated by means of special intensive studies or surveys. Such undertakings may assume a variety of forms. Some are administrative studies, that is, their objective is to assess the efficiency of the going program. Often these studies are limited to one functional field or even to one agency. In one such study, for example, eleven agencies offering services to dependent children were appraised. The recommendations resulting from this examination centered mainly upon proposed improvements in the operations of the agencies and closer integration of their programs. A community survey has a more far-reach-

ing purpose. It seeks to examine the need for social services in the community and to determine whether these needs are reasonably well met by the existing programs of the agencies. This type of study may also be limited to a single functional field, such as health or child welfare. In recent years, however, many communities have inaugurated community surveys that covered all fields of social work. These studies involve employment of a considerable staff and are usually very costly. They commonly result in publication of extensive reports which are designed to guide the community in developing its social services in the years immediately ahead. Some communities believe that these comprehensive surveys are well worth their cost. Since they are usually conducted by experts imported for the purpose, the findings often receive wider attention than self-studies made by local groups. Although most of these community studies are instituted by some local private agency, such as a community chest board or the council of social agencies, they usually include some examination of the public social services in the community, since rearrangements in the private field are conditioned by the volume and quality of the public services available.

Official surveys are usually conducted by commissions or special committees appointed either by an elected executive officer, such as a governor or a mayor, or by authorization of a legislative body. Many investigations of this type have been instituted in recent years. A good many of these have been limited to the administration of relief. Some, however, have been concerned primarily with the development of plans for an improved program of social services. A conspicuous illustration of this type of study was the investigation of health needs in the United States by the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities. Ordinarily official inquiries into existing programs touch only upon the public services. Although some material may be included to show the kinds of private agencies available in the community, there is seldom any authorization to evaluate the voluntary programs.

An official survey enjoys a status that privately instituted studies cannot attain. If a survey is made by reason of executive order or legislative action, there is presumably an obligation for some responsible authority to give heed to the findings. This does not mean, of course, that the recommendations will necessarily be followed. It merely provides a certain measure of assurance that the inquiry will be given some official attention. During the last decade, for example, there have been several official inquiries into the administration of public relief in Illinois. Although some of the most important recommendations have not been adopted, there is

evidence that the findings were in each case examined by responsible elected officials. Both in official and in nonofficial surveys it is usually helpful to organize an advisory committee or committees to work with the employed investigators. Such an arrangement helps to develop a foundation of informed opinion that proves useful in the subsequent follow-up activities that must be initiated if the community is to derive maximum benefit from the study.

Surveys and special studies are periodic in character. For that very reason they are often of great benefit in awakening a community from a lethargic acceptance of the status quo. But the day-to-day job of fact-gathering and interpretation, though less dramatic, is, in the long run, of greater importance. Interest in social problems may be stimulated by short-time, intensive studies, but it must be sustained and developed by the continuous impact of the materials abstracted from the field of social practice. Where, then, does responsibility for this day-to-day job rest? Perhaps most citizens have some knowledge of social problems. But this knowledge may be very fragmentary and, in many cases, is definitely incorrect. Where is authoritative information to be sought? Is it the responsibility of the merchant, the laborer, the white-collar employee, to assemble accurate facts in this area? Or should the community expect social agencies and social workers to perform this function? Under modern conditions, group life is characterized by specialization of function. Most people are fully occupied with their own business or profession and have neither the time nor the opportunity to assemble facts about problems that may interest them or concerning which they may have a sense of responsibility. They have a right to expect that those who spend their working days in handling such matters will be in a position to supply answers to their questions. In the community organization process, final decisions are seldom made by social workers; they are made by groups who represent leadership in the community. The quality of the decisions reached, however, is in considerable measure an index of the social worker's skill in teaching. And the teaching function in community organization is, in turn, dependent upon the ability of the social worker to relate himself creatively to the sources from which the factual basis must be derived.

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## DOCUMENT 6-A

### PROPOSALS CONCERNING SCOPE, METHOD, AND TIME REQUIREMENTS OF GROUP WORK STUDY IN CHICAGO<sup>4</sup>

1. *A two- to two-and-a-half-year study* should be undertaken rather than a short-time study.
  - one half-year required in planning, development of instruments, and enlistment of agency co-operation.
  - one year for the completion of various phases of study by agencies.
  - one year for assembling of comparable data from individual agency studies on a city-wide basis, and for conferences on the implications of the study.

Opposed to a short-term study because of the pressure it involves upon agencies and because the study then gets set apart from the regular functions of the Council of Social Agencies.
2. The study should be a *guided self-study*. Each agency should study itself, using the agreed-upon criteria and instruments. Leadership would be provided by the study to stimulate, assist, and co-ordinate such self-study.
3. *Various phases of group work should be studied simultaneously* by the agencies. A time schedule for each phase should be developed and all agencies should be encouraged to work within such schedule.
  - collection of data comparably and simultaneously done.
  - group discussion carried on about practices in the various phases.
4. The study director's functions would be:
  - a) Planning and development of methods of study
  - b) Assisting agencies in self-study
  - c) Fostering collective thinking about group work practices
  - d) Evaluation of the material gathered
  - e) Co-ordination and preparation of city-wide report

The study director might be a full-time or a part-time person who would be assisted by specialists in various phases, to be employed part time for the period when a given phase was being studied.
5. *Suggested phases of group work to be studied*
  - a) What agencies conceive to be their present functions (including questions about their own functions)

<sup>4</sup> Submitted by Roy Sorenson, Margaret Svendsen, and Harleigh Trecker.

- b) Geographical distribution of group work agencies (to be studied in relation to population)
  - c) Analysis of constituency: age, sex, nationality, geographic and socio-economic distribution
  - d) Facilities and equipment
  - e) Leadership: professional and volunteer
  - f) Group processes: grouping practices, educational methods, stability of groups
  - g) Guidance: within group processes, special facilities for dealing with individual problems and relationship to case work agencies and clinics
  - h) Policy formation: analysis of board, functions of staff in relation to board, board in relation to constituency, committees
  - i) Reaction to community: neighborhood, Council of Social Agencies, other social work fabric, and general community life
  - j) Evaluatory efforts: records, past methods of study, and evaluation
  - k) Reaction of participants and outside persons to agency and program
  - l) Problems which the agency encounters: in carrying out own program and lack in own resources.
6. Suggested *steps in developing study* (for executive committee):
- a) Discussion with agencies of proposed plan
  - b) Consideration of director (agencies should have privilege of indorsing person)
  - c) Order of phases to be determined by the interest of the agency, and the chance of satisfaction in early stages (examples: constituency, problems)

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## CHAPTER VII

### INDIVIDUALIZING THE COMMUNITY

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IT IS a basic principle in social case work that treatment must be adjusted to the circumstances in the individual case. Hence an early effort is made to investigate and to set down accurately in writing the facts that will guide the practitioner in shaping a plan of treatment. Moreover, this quest for facts continues throughout the period during which the case remains under care. New facts are constantly being discovered, and new situations are always arising. Likewise, on the basis of experience with the client, the case worker steadily gains added insight into the meanings of facts that have long been well known.

In community organization a similar approach is required. No two communities are alike. Hence no formula for organizing group forces can be devised that can be applied with equal promise of success in any and every community. Before an intelligent, planned approach to community organization can be undertaken, investigations must be made and facts must be recorded. Moreover, the task never ends. Community situations change. Old services become obsolete in the light of new knowledge. New needs arise. Those in positions of authority are replaced by others. All such changes affect, directly or indirectly, the process of community organization. Hence they must be recorded, correlated, and analyzed if community organization activities are to keep abreast of changing situations.

The observing and recording of facts about the community should be correlated under one recognized leadership. In urban communities the council of social agencies would, in all probability, be the organization upon which this task would naturally fall. However, in some places lack of resources and inadequate personnel reduce the council to a position that precludes the exercise of leadership; or the local tradition may be such that the agencies look to some other organization for guidance, as, for example, the community chest or an important functional agency. In



rural communities, councils of social agencies are comparatively scarce. In many such areas no orderly arrangement for studying community problems has ever been worked out. At one time in the state of Washington the legislature provided for local committees, on a county-wide basis, to assume this responsibility. For various reasons this arrangement was not continued,<sup>1</sup> but it suggested interesting possibilities that are undoubtedly worthy of further exploration.

#### LEADERSHIP IN RURAL AREAS

At the present time the gathering of facts concerning rural communities is likely to be undertaken, if at all, by the organization that employs one or more professionally trained social workers. This may be a private agency, such as a Red Cross chapter, or it may be the public welfare bureau of the county. Very often in rural counties there is only one organization that employs professional personnel. Where this is the case, this one agency will have to determine the extent to which its obligations in the field of treatment permit it, in light of its resources, to devote an effort to the study of community problems. First things must come first. The agency must take care of those in need before it branches out into other fields. But certainly it must also be clear that to devote all resources to a program of immediate care is, in a sense, as discouraging as to pour water into a sieve; for no foundation is being laid to develop improved provisions or to institute preventive measures.

If, in a rural or semiurban center, there are several agencies that employ qualified social workers, it is seldom good practice for any one organization to pre-empt the field of fact-gathering and community planning. Preferably there should be conferences among the agencies, and a plan should be worked out whereby responsibility is shared. In case work it has proved to be perfectly feasible to devise a mutually satisfactory division of the field. In community organization, similar understandings are equally possible. One agency agrees to assemble facts in one area of community life and another promises to investigate some other sector. Usually a committee is formed to insure frequent consultation and continuing leadership under a chairman selected by the participating organizations.

The supply of professionally trained social workers in the United States is still far below the number required to fill existing social work positions. This means that in scores of rural counties there is no employed social worker who has been equipped by his education to assume a position of leadership in instituting fact-gathering activities. This does not necessarily

<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of the county committees in the state of Washington see pp. 464-67.

mean, however, that no study of the community can be initiated. In many of these rural counties very competent groups of laymen can be found who are able and willing to dig out facts and to assemble data. Very often, too, the employees of the local agency or agencies, though perhaps not professionally equipped, do have a related background of education and experience and a desire to serve the community. These employees are often very glad to share in a study of the community and are in a position to provide much useful assistance to the responsible committee. Obviously, however, most local volunteer groups of this type periodically need the advice and guidance of a well-qualified social worker. In many of the states the state department of welfare is alert to opportunities of this type and, if the volunteer group appears to be promising, will gladly supply as much supervision as its resources permit. Or, if this service is not available, outside assistance may sometimes be provided by the field representatives of national private agencies.

#### RECORDING

Regardless of the auspices under which the gathering of facts about the community proceeds, there must be some orderly method of recording the material assembled. Here again it is impossible to suggest a plan that would be equally applicable in all situations. Theoretically, there is no limit to the details that might be assembled; practically, some limit must be set. In centers where there is a well-financed council of social agencies, all of the paraphernalia of research may be utilized, including maps, pictograms, graphs, files, photographs, published reports, and the like. In fact, the material may easily become so voluminous that it must be abstracted and summarized periodically in order to reduce it to manageable proportions. In smaller jurisdictions, less ambitious methods have been used with satisfactory results.

If resources are limited or if fact-gathering is just being started, a card file or a loose-leaf notebook is recommended. Either can be alphabetized, with the subject matter arranged accordingly. If a card file is used, the cards should be large enough to accommodate a fair amount of data. If the file is to contain a distribution of the population by quinquennial age groups, for example, it is very inconvenient to have these data spread over two or more cards. The familiar three-by-five-inch card is thus ordinarily too small. Although some people believe a card file is more likely to be kept current than a notebook from which pages must be removed whenever a change is to be made, the card file does have one major disadvantage: It is never easy to place a card file before a committee. This is

an important drawback, since a major purpose in assembling information is to have it available for the use of social-planning groups when occasion arises.

Perhaps, all things considered, most social workers will find a loose-leaf notebook best suited to their needs and purposes. The material can be indexed and can be separated alphabetically by dividers. Most of the entries will be typewritten. Occasionally printed data may be available. In such instances, it is best to clip the material and paste it on a sheet of regulation size. Sooner or later, clippings that are merely stuck loosely into the book either become dog-eared or are lost entirely. Now and then a chart or a map may be produced that is too large for the book. A few such inserts may be folded to fit. An effort should be made, however, to avoid fold-ins; for they are usually cumbersome to use and, if a good many are inserted, the appearance of the volume will be uninviting. If a considerable volume of material is ultimately collected, one notebook may be too small to encompass it. It is better to have two volumes that are easy to consult than to crowd the material or to insert so much in one volume that the book is unwieldy. For the sake of convenience the notebooks or files in which these facts are assembled may be referred to as "the community abstract."

The loose-leaf notebook (or the card file, if that system is preferred) should be strictly limited to factual materials. If this policy is followed, the volume can then be placed freely in the hands of various individuals or committees that have need to consult it. The interpretations of this body of data and the actions it inspires are "derived" materials and should be recorded elsewhere. Often this secondary record will be in the minutes of official bodies, such as planning committees or boards of directors. Scattered in this way throughout various official records the "derived" material may need to be pulled together if it is to serve the professional purposes of the social worker. Some social workers have achieved this objective by keeping a log or diary. In this log, which is strictly for their own use, they enter their interpretations of the facts they assemble, the uses to which they put these facts, and official actions taken which, in their judgment, were conditioned by the factual material presented. A few such diaries have gone further and have included all the various day-by-day activities that relate to the community organization process, as, for example, contacts made, publicity obtained, committees organized, and so forth. Those who have built up this type of detailed day-by-day summary have hoped that it would ultimately reveal a pattern with general implications.

At our present stage of development there is no adequate proof that a log or diary of the type described above does actually contribute to the formulation of general principles. It is to be hoped that some experiments along these lines will continue until the potentialities of this approach have been fully appraised. Meantime, however, it is clear that the professional social worker needs something in addition to the bare statement of the facts that have been incorporated in the community abstract. What kind of supplementary document will serve this purpose without making additional heavy demands upon the time of the employed staff?

The recommendation here is that periodically the social worker formulate a "community diagnosis." The analogy with the social diagnosis in case work treatment is apparent. The community diagnosis should always be reduced to writing, even though the social worker may have no intention of showing it to anyone. The great virtue of the written diagnosis is that it forces the social worker to decide definitely just what he thinks. So long as the reactions to community data remain unformulated, it is easy to overlook some areas entirely and to remain comfortably vague about others. But once the individual undertakes to prepare a written analysis, he is obliged to scrutinize his factual material in its entirety and to reach some definite decisions as to what he thinks about it.

#### THE COMMUNITY DIAGNOSIS

The process of arriving at a community diagnosis is one of analysis, synthesis, and interpretation. The social worker reviews carefully the body of factual material that has been assembled. During this review he jots down tentative interpretations that occur to him. He seeks to identify evidence of the existence of unmet social needs. He tries to determine whether the facts suggest inadequate clearance among agencies or ineffective correlation and integration of the services offered. He asks himself whether there is any ground for suspecting a causal relationship between or among different sets of facts. Can the high infant mortality rate, for example, be associated in any way with the volume of nursing service available, with existing standards for midwives, with housing conditions, or with any of the other numerous factors that might conceivably influence it? What reason, if any, can be found for a change, either desirable or undesirable, in the trend of a particular service—for example, the decline in volume of almshouse care? What evidence is there that a given policy is producing the results expected? Does it appear, for example, that the new program of student counseling in the schools has reduced juvenile delinquency? Has the inauguration of adult classes in English stimulated

applications for naturalization? If a new policy has not borne fruit, can a reason for its failure be identified? The social worker goes through his material item by item with such queries in mind. When he has finished, the informal notes he has taken provide a basis for undertaking to clarify his problems and his objectives by writing the community diagnosis.

The formulating of the community diagnosis should be approached with a realistic appreciation of the adequacy and accuracy of the material at hand. On some points the evidence will be clear. In other areas the data may provide nothing more than a clue. Moreover, limitations of time and of resources operate to restrict the activities that may be undertaken at any given time. For these reasons the diagnosis may profitably be divided into two parts, one dealing with clearly identified problems of an immediate nature and the other with situations that will obviously require long-time attention. For example, evidence of a need to locate larger numbers of homes suitable for the foster-care of dependent children would doubtless be interpreted as a problem requiring immediate attention. This is a need which, under ordinary circumstances, could probably be met at some time within the reasonably near future. On the other hand, many problems are of such a nature that they obviously will not be solved in the near future. Data suggesting that the benefit provisions of the state unemployment compensation act should be liberalized or that the municipality should acquire acreage for recreational purposes illustrate the kinds of developments that ordinarily are achieved only after a considerable period of education and promotional activity. In addition to the list of short-time and long-time problems, the diagnosis may also profitably include a summary of problems identified in a general way, though not with sufficient clarity or exactness to permit of accurate definition. This summary may suggest the kinds of supplementary data the agency will wish to assemble and the areas it may seek to explore in the ensuing period.

Undoubtedly, a written community diagnosis will frequently reveal an appalling number of weaknesses in existing community provisions. It would be folly to attack this entire list at once. In deciding which problems to assail first, it is necessary to establish priorities. This may be done by going through the list with three questions in mind: (1) Concerning which of these needs does the agency now have the most convincing body of evidence? (2) Which of these problems are most directly related to needs which the board members already recognize as important? (3) In which of these areas does it appear that there is greatest hope of evoking community concern? The objective should be to settle upon a very limited number of problems to which the agency will seek to give sustained at-

tention in the period ahead. This final list will not be restricted, however, to short-time developments only. An effort will be made concurrently to promote an understanding of some of the problems that probably cannot be successfully resolved until existing attitudes have been changed or favorable sentiments have been built up. The following illustration will perhaps suggest the way in which fact-gathering, analysis, and diagnosis lead to the identification of specific problems and the formulation of concrete objectives.

#### SHORT-TIME PROBLEMS

1. Inadequate number of suitable foster-homes for children
2. Ineffective clearance with visiting nurse association on cases known to both agencies
3. Insufficient use of Boy Scouts, Y.M.C.A., and settlements in developing social habits among dependent boys in foster-care

#### LONG-TIME PROBLEMS

1. Inadequate vocational guidance and placement service in public schools
2. Exclusion of aged aliens from benefits under state law governing Old Age Assistance
3. Poor housing; no provision in state law for creation of local housing authority

#### PROBLEMS IN NEED OF FURTHER INVESTIGATION

1. Quality of group work experience provided for boys in centers conducted by park board
2. Circumstances of mothers whose applications for Aid to Dependent Children are rejected
3. Effectiveness of clearance between clinics and social agencies on venereal disease cases

#### THE FOLLOW-UP

In case work the social diagnosis is followed by the co-operative development of a plan of social treatment. Similarly, in community organization the fixing of a limited number of specific objectives should be followed by the development of a plan to attain them. In some cases this plan may envisage a specific new activity. For example, because the existing supply of suitable foster-homes for dependent children is inadequate, the plan may be to interest the board in inaugurating an intensive short-time campaign designed to enlist the interest and co-operation of potential foster-mothers. Or the board may be asked to invite the board of directors of the visiting nurse association to a conference at which the interrelationships of the programs of the two agencies will be examined. Group thinking and group discussion at board meetings will usually, in the end, determine the lines of endeavor to be pursued.

Very often, however, the plan of action will not involve new approaches. Frequently it will be mainly a question of introducing new materials to groups with whom contacts have already been established. Let us assume,

for the sake of illustration, that the objective is to obtain the appointment of a skilled leader to introduce a modern program of vocational guidance and placement into the public school system. The first step is to create in the community an awareness of the need. Perhaps this is done through presentation of case material from time to time to the board of the agency, to the case committee, and to other groups. If possible, the cases are presented in such a way that members of the group will arrive independently at a conclusion as to what should be done to correct the situation. In addition, other mediums are used to present the need, such as the annual report, or the address which the social worker is invited to give at the annual meeting of the parent-teacher association. Meantime, contacts with the school authorities are developed. It is entirely likely that there is already an awareness of the need within the school system and that assistance from the social agency will be welcome. Back of these efforts lies the hope that one or more of these groups may ultimately become genuinely interested in the problem and will propose that efforts be made to obtain favorable action. In short, the plan of action often involves merely a focusing of interest rather than the introduction of new methods or new forms of organization.

In social case work both the social diagnosis and the development of treatment are likely to be modified from time to time as new evidence is brought to light. Likewise in community organization there should be a periodic review of methods and objectives. A thorough analysis, leading to a community diagnosis and the development of a plan of action, should be undertaken once each year, if possible. In the interim, at the end of the six months' period, it is advisable to institute a somewhat less thorough review, mainly for the purpose of determining whether plans previously made are developing as hoped or whether the experience indicates that they should be changed in some respects.

The semiannual review is desirable even though comparatively little new information has been obtained since the formulation of the plan of action six months earlier. As a matter of fact, some of the data relating to the community do not change rapidly in any case. But even though few additional facts have been assembled, the experiences of a six months' period often shed new light on old facts, indicating that the earlier conclusions may not have been entirely sound and that some modifications of plan are needed. Moreover, even though the external situation has altered very little, there is always the important possibility that new interpretations of known facts have developed and that group attitudes have changed. Care should be taken, however, not to make sweeping

changes in the list of objectives except when there is a convincing reason to do so. With respect to the long-time problems particularly, a fairly long period of sustained effort is usually required if substantial headway is to be made. It is frustrating to all concerned to shift frequently from one purpose to another without registering any specific accomplishments with respect to any of them.

#### COMMUNITY DATA

The foregoing discussion has been based entirely on the premise that a persistent effort has been made to collect and record data relating to the community. This means that, as a first step, the geographical boundaries of the community have been defined. In most cases the agency will be charged, either by law or by practice, with rendering a service within a clearly delimited territory. Probably in a majority of instances its obligations will extend to the limits of a familiar political subdivision, such as a city or a county. But, however that may be, the area in which the agency undertakes to provide service will normally constitute the community concerning which it will attempt to collect facts. Naturally, this does not mean that the record will be limited to phenomena that are confined strictly within these geographical limits. Services that are state-wide, as, for example, the testing of water supplies by the state department of health, will also be included; for, though they may not be locally controlled, such services are a part of the pattern of welfare activities in the local community. Similarly, problems that manifest themselves locally will be described and measured as fully as possible, even though the origin is outside the community and remedies must be sought from larger jurisdictions. Thus, for example, migration of needy families into the community from the Dust Bowl or from other depressed areas would be closely observed, even though both the cause and the cure of the problem lay outside the bounds of local control.

Consideration must now be given to the kinds of facts that will be collected concerning the community and to the sources from which some of them may be derived. Obviously, no one outline can be developed that will suit the needs of any and every community. Adaptations must be made to fit the special circumstances obtaining in the jurisdiction. Limitations will be imposed both by the inaccessibility of some kinds of material and by the time at the disposal of the staff.

#### HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY

In the interest of understanding the background of the community, it is well to give early attention to its history. Many American communities



are still so young that people now living can recount from memory some of the events that occurred in the lives of the early settlers. Even in regions settled long ago, the pioneer period may still cast its shadow over the life of the community and may serve to explain attitudes, customs, and points of view that condition contemporary developments. Often an understanding of this background is indispensable if an accurate appraisal is to be made of the assets and liabilities that will influence the developments of the future. Moreover, the social worker is himself eager to become an accepted member of the community and to identify himself with its life. In many cases knowledge and appreciation of the history of the locality will accelerate the social worker's emotional identification with it. This is in itself an objective of sufficient importance to justify the effort required to locate and assimilate the historical material. Though blatant flaunting of one's knowledge is seldom characteristic of acceptable social conduct, it may be possible, in annual reports, in public addresses, or elsewhere, to remind the community of significant episodes in its past. Acceptance of the social worker by the community may be hastened if it is evident that he himself knows and respects local traditions.

The history of a community may usually be obtained from one of several possible sources. In many parts of the country, state historical societies have been in existence for some time. These societies often receive subsidies from the state government. Sometimes they are affiliated with an institution of higher learning, such as the state university. An astonishing number of local histories have been written. They usually give an account of the life of a town, a city, or a county. Some of them reflect high standards of historical research. Others are little more than an indifferent collection of photographs and biographies of pioneer residents. If such a history has been written, copies are likely to be available in the local or state library or in the files of the state historical society. In recently settled sections of the country, additional material may sometimes be obtained by questioning early settlers still living in the area. As a last resort, it is usually possible to consult the old files of local newspapers, though this is an undertaking that may involve an unwarranted investment of time.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The population of a community is its most important asset. Most, if not all, the facts relating to population may be set forth in the community abstract very succinctly in statistical tables. The people in the area are enumerated decennially by the United States Bureau of the Census. It is useful to transcribe these figures in terms of the constituent political sub-

divisions of the area, as, for example, by townships in a county or by wards in a city. The attributes of these populations may likewise be presented in terms of these same subdivisions. What is the age distribution in the area as a whole and in each of its subdivisions? Is there an equal or an unequal distribution of the sexes? What is the racial composition of the population? How many are native born and foreign born, respectively, and in what countries were the latter born? How many of these people live in incorporated towns? How many in the open country? What is the marital status of these people? Answers to questions of this type provide the basic frame of reference for further study of the community.

It should be noted that these basic demographic facts can be related to one another in ways that are sometimes very useful. For example, it may be informative to distribute the foreign-born population by age. Or it may be worth while to distribute the Negro population by age, sex, and marital status. So many combinations and interrelationships can be provided that it is essential to decide at the outset just which data are most important. If later developments indicate a need for additional combinations, these may usually be obtained from the original sources. In the beginning, emphasis should be placed upon broad classes of facts that describe the composition and location of the population.

The demographic material referred to above is ordinarily taken from the most recent census. In addition, it may be desirable to know something about the trend in population developments. Has the population been increasing or decreasing? Is the proportion of Negroes larger or smaller than formerly? What percentage of the population is over sixty-five years of age today, as compared with the percentage at each of the last three or four enumerations? Has the ratio between urban and rural families remained fairly constant? What shifts have occurred in the populations of the constituent subdivisions of the city or county—that is, in the wards, towns, and townships? Figures of this type that show trend are sometimes of great importance in revealing the results of social and economic policies.

The reports of the United States Bureau of the Census are the primary source from which to obtain demographic data. These reports are usually available in local libraries. If not, they may sometimes be borrowed from the state library. It is always best to consult the original reports, if possible. Summaries reprinted in almanacs or in chamber-of-commerce bulletins may be subject to errors. Sometimes the report for a given census will give trend figures extending back over a number of preceding enumerations. If not, it may be necessary to consult the reports of several successive censuses in order to compile the desired information. In such cases

care should be exercised to make sure that figures are comparable throughout the period. Often the published data do not show certain interrelationships that may be desired; or the facts may be given only for a large jurisdiction, such as a county, with no breakdown by constituent townships. In such cases it is advisable to send an inquiry to the Bureau of the Census. Possibly the data have been tabulated in the form desired but have not been published. Or, if the material has not been so tabulated, the Bureau may be willing to compile the data in the form requested. Usually, of course, there would be a charge for this service.

The demographic material should also include data with respect to births and deaths. For the nation as a whole, this material is compiled and published by the Division of Vital Statistics of the United States Bureau of the Census. In addition, it is desirable to ascertain whether the state department of health publishes data in this field. Sometimes state publications enlarge upon the summaries published for the nation as a whole, particularly by giving the facts with respect to the smaller political subdivisions, such as townships. In large cities local registrars of vital statistics may also be willing to co-operate by supplying information that has been compiled purely for local uses.

Comparisons are always of great interest and importance in analyzing vital statistics. People wish to know whether the local birth and death rates are increasing or decreasing. They also wish to know how the rates in the local community compare with those of other cities or counties. Hence, in compiling these data, it is useful to include trend figures and to show the rates for a number of other communities and for the state and nation as a whole. Care should be taken to indicate whether the figures shown are recorded rates or resident rates. A community that is a health center or that contains a large number of hospitals may show a recorded rate (based on deaths or births that occur in the community) that is very different from the resident rate. In some communities it may be desirable to show both rates. For example, a county in Arizona to which large numbers of health-seekers are attracted might present the recorded death rate to show the magnitude of the problem imposed upon it by the influx of sick people from other parts of the country. The resident rate would be used, however, if the purpose was to show the "force of mortality" operating in the county as compared with other jurisdictions.

In the case of cities, vital statistics should be presented by wards or other constituent areas. A single figure for a metropolis may conceal many variations. For example, the birth or death rate for a large city may not vary widely from the corresponding rate for the state as a whole. But if

rates are shown for the wards of the city, it may be that some of these rates will be far above and others far below the average. Rates for the constituent subdivisions are needed if an effort is to be made to direct the flow of social services into those districts where greatest need for them is indicated.

Crude death rates seldom provide answers to some of the most urgent questions relating to the health of the community. These rates should be supplemented by others that do throw some light on these problems. Chief of these are the infant mortality rate and certain of the specific cause-of-death rates. If the community is composed of more than one important racial group, it is desirable to present infant mortality rates separately by race. This may reveal very important differentials in the rates for the various races. Some selectivity must be exercised in presenting the specific cause-of-death rates. To present them all would be cumbersome. In most communities the causes of death to which greatest interest attaches are the following: maternity, tuberculosis, accident, homicide, venereal disease, cardiac ailments, and cancer. As with most other rates in the field of vital statistics, it is desirable to present these figures in such a way as to show the local trend and to provide a basis for comparisons with other communities.

Demographic material lends itself particularly well to graphic presentation. If the community abstract is to be used for purposes of public education and is also to be placed at the disposal of various study groups it may be worth while to convert some of the statistical tables into graphs, pictograms, and cartograms. Some people are resistant to statistical tables but will quickly grasp the same data if they are presented in visual form. A graph showing the trend of the infant mortality rate will be more impressive to such persons than the actual figures themselves. And a map showing the incidence of maternal mortality in each of the wards of the city may be remembered long after the exact facts have been forgotten. Sometimes effective graphic material is available in printed form at the office of the local or state health department and will be provided on request.

#### GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS

In all parts of the country certain basic services are administered by local governments. Hence one of the most important sections of the community abstract relates to the structure and the functions of these local political units. The statutes of the state provide the primary resource for this material. Public reports, such as the annual or biennial reports of the state department of welfare, the state department of labor, the state

department of education, the state department of health, and others, also often contain accurate and illuminating discussions, not only of the powers of the department and of the local political subdivisions, but also of the methods of administration currently in use. In populous jurisdictions the corresponding local departments may also issue reports containing much valuable information. In some states this material is available in concise form in a textbook of civics prepared for use in the public schools of the state. If the social worker discovers conflicting statements in the printed material or has difficulty in interpreting the meaning of a statutory grant of powers, it is desirable to consult the appropriate local officials or to write to the attorney-general of the state for further information.

Frequently it may be convenient to present the powers and duties of the officials of local governments in outline form. In the interest of brevity, it may be necessary merely to mention some functions by name. For example, the maintenance of the secondary county road system may be the responsibility of the board of county supervisors. This information might be useful if a system of work relief were inaugurated in the county, but ordinarily it would not be the kind of material on which detailed statements would be needed as to powers, procedures, and the like. On the other hand, if the board of county supervisors is responsible for administration of the poor fund, detailed information will be desired as to its powers, duties, and methods of operation in that area. In any particular case the test is whether the function is directly or remotely related to social welfare interests.

One or more organization charts may provide the best means of setting forth the salient facts with respect to local government. Such charts show the elective offices in the jurisdiction and, if space permits, the numbers and types of appointive officers each may employ. It may even be practicable to include summary statements indicating the functions of the elected and appointed officials. Government has become increasingly complex, however, and it will usually be necessary to supplement the organization charts with descriptive outlines in which more detailed information can be provided.

In most communities the number of separate governing bodies authorized by law is surprisingly large. If the community abstract covers an entire county, it may be necessary to include not only the county officials but also the officials of incorporated cities and towns, of townships, of school districts, and of various special authorities, such as park boards. However, some of these authorities may have duties that are very remote-

ly related to social welfare problems. In such instances it may not be necessary to include them, except perhaps in the organization chart. For example, irrigation may be of vital importance in the economic life of a given county, but the officials of an irrigation district may possess such strictly limited powers that their operations are unlikely to touch directly upon the problems of social agencies. Information is sought in greatest detail with respect to those officials whose duties are likely to affect the administration and development of the social services. This would include peace officers, such as sheriff or police commissioner; officers connected with the courts, such as probation officers; and officials charged with providing social services, such as poor relief, medical relief, categorical assistance, or almshouse care. Special care should be taken to set forth permissive powers that are authorized by law but are not exercised locally, such, for example, as the power to organize special classes for handicapped children in the schools.

Local governments commonly discharge many of their obligations without receiving help or supervision from the state. In recent years, however, the tendency has been for the state to provide increased oversight and to require local governments to measure up to certain standards. In some instances supervision has been implemented by a grant of state funds. These relationships with the state authorities are of great importance. Frequently the state, through its power of supervision, is able to effect very important improvements in community welfare services. Hence the community abstract should indicate in detail the nature and extent of the supervisory powers intrusted to state authorities in their relationships with the operating agencies of local governments.

State services that are available to local citizens are likewise of great importance. People have been known to go along for years without obtaining the benefit of a needed service merely because they did not know the service would be provided by the state on request. As a rule, a list of such services may be compiled by consulting the annual reports of the various state departments or by querying them directly. Special care should be taken to include the less-well-known services, such as scholarships available at the state educational institutions, loan of books from state libraries, serological tests provided in state laboratories, etc. With respect both to these and to the better-known service functions of the state, such as care of the mentally ill and the handicapped, it is desirable to include detailed information as to eligibility requirements and method of applying for admission or for the benefit sought.

Among the local officials in the community, few are of greater potential

use in a community organization program than the county agricultural agent and the home demonstration agent. Thanks to federal funds and to long-continued pressure for high standards in the selection of personnel, most of the people filling these positions in the counties are very well equipped for their jobs, both by education and by experience. They are usually a reliable resource to consult in assembling data with respect to the agricultural assets of the community. Some of their work is promotional and educational in character and is carried on through organized groups. Hence they also have useful information about existing organizations—social, economic, political, agricultural, and educational—and they may be able and willing to assist the social worker in establishing contacts with some of these groups.

#### AGRICULTURE

Whether the community abstract contains detailed information about agriculture will depend upon the importance of that industry in the locality. Doubtless, in many cases, the facts desired can be quickly supplied by the county agricultural agent. If not, there may be a state department of agriculture to which inquiries may be addressed. The reports resulting from the periodic census of agriculture taken under the direction of the United States Bureau of the Census may also contain some of the data desired. These reports also provide a basis for making comparisons with other agricultural districts. Among the basic facts of importance in understanding rural problems are the following: average acreage of farms; average farm acreage under cultivation; price range of farm lands (per acre); principal crops; proportion of farms owner-operated; proportion operating under share-cropper system; tax delinquency on farm properties; marketing facilities; extent of membership in farm organizations, such as the Farm Bureau or the Grange; number of agricultural laborers employed; range of wages of farm labor; number of seasonal laborers employed; housing provisions for seasonal laborers; proportion of farms electrified; number, kind, and coverage of producers' or consumers' co-operatives in operation; proportion of farms mortgaged; extent of crop insurance; federal farm policies operative in the locality, as, for example, the soil-conservation program; rural school program; number of churches located in the open country and their membership; standards of housing; provision for sanitation and drainage; extent of child labor.

Some of the information suggested in the preceding paragraph will be difficult or impossible to obtain. Moreover, there are wide differences in the importance of the various items. Some of the facts, as, for example, the extent of child labor and the numbers of seasonal laborers imported,

should be obtained as quickly as possible. Other facts, such as the extent of rural electrification, though important in appraising the conditions of farm life, are not of immediate importance. In general, the data that may directly affect the service program of the agency must take precedence over facts that have broader and more remote objectives in view.

#### INDUSTRIAL DATA

Similarly, if factories are numerous in the community, each social worker will have to exercise judgment in selecting the kinds of data that have the most direct relationship to the service program of the agency. Thus the provision for compensation in cases of industrial accident constitutes a body of information of greater immediate utility than facts concerning the kinds of materials or products turned out by the local factories. Some of the industrial data needed for the community abstract may be taken from published material, such as reports of the state department of labor, federal or state censuses of manufacturing, and state statutes. Very often, however, it is necessary to obtain information through interviews with local people, such as the personnel managers of factories, officials of trade-unions, factory inspectors, and the placement officials of labor exchanges.

The most obvious facts to record concerning industry are the numbers and kinds of factories in the community. It is also useful to include a spot map on which the locations of these establishments are indicated. Unless there is great diversification, it may be possible to indicate on the map, by means of a key, the kinds of goods produced in each. More immediately important are the facts relating to employment. How many workers are employed in these establishments? How many of these are skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled, respectively? How many are women? Are minority groups, such as Negroes, accepted for employment? What are the wage scales for the various classes of workers? Is the rate of labor turnover low or high? Are the employees unionized? Is there a closed-shop agreement? Has employment been stabilized or are there recurring periods of high and low employment? What are the limitations on employment of women and children? Are these enforced? If so, how? What are the provisions for the safety, health, and welfare of the employees? Do these exist because voluntarily installed by the management or are they statutory requirements? What are the provisions for compensation in case of industrial illness or accident? How are these provisions administered? These are typical of the wide variety of facts concerning which information should be sought. If the social worker makes contacts with individuals who are in



a position to supply these facts, he should also determine whether it will be possible to be notified when important changes occur. Some establishments publish house organs or news bulletins and are willing to send copies routinely to those who have an interest in happenings in the industry.

#### ORGANIZED GROUPS

It is a characteristic of organized groups that the members have at least one interest in common. Because there is some cohesion within groups, they are potentially very useful instruments for the dissemination of information and for the promotion of objectives they may decide to adopt. Hence the community abstract may well include a section that lists and describes the important organizations functioning in the area. Since most communities contain large numbers of organizations, it may be desirable to divide them into groups, in the community abstract, according to major purpose or function. If this is done, some difficulties will be encountered in classifying certain organizations. For example, a church society may be carrying on a social welfare program. Should it be included with religious agencies or with social welfare organizations? The purpose of this section of the community abstract is not to arrive at a correct statistical total but to present descriptive material that will indicate the objectives and the attributes of organized groups. Hence classification is not a question of major importance. The chief consideration is to assemble the information in such a way that it is easy to find and easy to use. Ordinarily, if an organization carries on an active social service program, it would be preferable to include it with social welfare agencies rather than with some other category, such as religious organizations; for, under ordinary circumstances, the pattern of the social services will be the basic concern of those who use the collected data. Cross-references can be inserted if it appears that some users of the community abstract might have difficulty in finding the information desired. Thus, in the illustration cited above, an adequate summary of the agency might be included with the social welfare agencies, with only a cross-reference listed in the section on religious organizations. Although it is possible to subdivide organizations into many categories, perhaps the following list will prove adequate in most communities: (1) agencies with health or social service programs; (2) churches and religious agencies; (3) business associations, such as chambers of commerce; (4) fraternal and patriotic societies; (5) labor unions; (6) women's clubs; (7) service clubs, such as Kiwanis, Rotary, etc.; (8) professional organizations, such as a county medical association.

There will be considerable difference in the amounts of information needed with respect to these various kinds of groups. Usually the facts concerning social service agencies will be collected in considerable detail. Many of these organizations publish annual reports, from which much of the desired information can be extracted. In addition, however, it will ordinarily be necessary to interview responsible representatives of the agency in order to check carefully on certain operating policies that might throw light on the existing interrelationships among the agencies. Intake policies, employment practices, standards of education and wage scales of employed personnel, procedure used in family budgeting, board paid in foster-homes, fees charged for services rendered, and methods used in raising funds—these are some of the points on which information should be obtained. In many instances it may be unwise to ask for some of this information at the outset. Some organizations are sensitive about certain of their practices and do not wish to disclose them. If the social worker suspects that such an attitude exists, it is better to wait until relationships of mutual confidence have developed before questioning the agency too exhaustively. In many instances, however, the facts desired are set forth in available reports and will be freely discussed and explained upon request. Because of its immediate utility, it is usually desirable to compile the facts concerning social service agencies before undertaking to obtain information concerning other organized groups in the community.

With respect to most organized groups, the following facts will be desired: number of members or supporters; qualifications for membership, if any; purpose of the organization; committee organization (especially the names and personnel of any committees with social welfare objectives, as, for example, a "Christmas basket" committee or a committee on "social legislation"); bulletins or house organs published, if any; place and dates of regular meetings; current program of activities; policy or tradition with respect to co-operation with social agencies (assistance in fund-raising, providing volunteers, accepting speakers from agencies, etc.). Accurate information on these points should in most cases provide an adequate basis for developing future relationships. As time goes on, further facts will be accumulated, especially with respect to those organizations that prove to be co-operative in advancing social welfare objectives. Moreover, it is important to note, on the basis of further observation and experience, the groups through which local spirit tends to find expression. In most communities—particularly in rural or semiurban districts—the populace tends to look to certain groups for leadership. If there is to be a community Christmas tree or if a campaign is inaugurated to instal play-

ground equipment in the park, these groups seem to move by common consent into positions of leadership and responsibility. In one place the traditional leader may be a chamber of commerce; elsewhere it may be the American legion or a woman's club. It is of importance that this evidence of confidence be entered in the record.

#### TWO VALUABLE GUIDES

The kinds of facts mentioned here for inclusion in the community abstract are important and basic. Obviously, however, the list is suggestive rather than exhaustive. In some communities data not suggested here might be of greater significance than those mentioned. It is necessary to individualize in this field no less than in case work. And even the outline provided above will, in some jurisdictions, prove excessive in the light of the demands upon the time of the employed staff. The section on organized groups alone implies tremendous labor in highly organized communities that support many health and welfare agencies in addition to the usual multiplicity of associations of other types. Fortunately, the social worker who finds opportunity to undertake a more exhaustive study can be referred to two publications admirably adapted to assist him. *What Social Workers Should Know about Their Own Communities* is an outline compiled by Margaret F. Byington at the request of the Russell Sage Foundation in 1911. It has served the needs of a generation of social workers. Very few publications in the field have been more widely or more productively used. Although last revised in 1929, it has by no means outlived its usefulness. The extensive developments in community life in recent decades, however, prompted the Russell Sage Foundation to undertake the publication of a new and expanded outline for the study of communities. The new publication, entitled *Your Community* was written by Joanna C. Colcord. Like its predecessor, this volume is destined to be a valuable guide for many years. Broad in scope and thorough in treatment, it is an outline that in most jurisdictions will have to be used selectively, as the author has suggested. But the social worker who wants help in deciding what facts to collect concerning a certain aspect of community life will find in this volume the directives from which his selection can be made.

Perhaps one important warning should be sounded in this discussion of fact-gathering. The collection of data is never an end in itself; it is only a means to an end. The genuinely creative process begins only when the facts are in. At that point the social worker must begin to share the facts and to stimulate a desire to delve for the meanings behind them. Then,

once the facts have been interpreted, the toil of imaginative thought begins. The purpose of this travail, which, as far as possible, all members of the agency should share, is to define a program and a plan of action. Animating the plan of action, sometimes recognized and sometimes not, is the drive that underlies all educational effort: the desire, in achieving a concrete objective, to effect during the process a change of attitude that will insure continued concern to seek improvements in group life.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE APPROACH TO THE COMMUNITY

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IN ANY position in which success in establishing relationships is a vital element, the initial approach is of consummate importance. To make an unfavorable impression or to arouse hostilities in the beginning may erect obstacles which will prove to be a definite handicap for a long time to come. Likewise, ineptitude in getting the program under way may retard the efforts to enlist interest in improving the community's welfare provisions. Hence this chapter will undertake to offer suggestions to the social worker who is just entering upon his responsibilities in a new community. In the interest of concreteness the assumption will be that the social worker has been employed to direct either an important private agency or a public welfare department in a semirural county. Social workers in other types of positions or in other kinds of communities should adapt these suggestions to fit their own particular situations.

It is a widespread practice for the new social worker to be introduced to the community, if possible, by a representative of the supervisory organization. In the case of a private agency this would probably be the field representative from the national or district headquarters. In the case of a public agency the social worker would doubtless be accompanied to the new job by a representative of the state department of welfare. But, whether thus accompanied or not, the first contact in the community would normally be with the president of the board of directors or with the elected or appointed layman at the head of the local public welfare program, as the case may be. If it is not possible to see the president or chairman, the alternative is to seek an interview with another responsible lay member. Usually this would be the first vice-president, the secretary of the board, or perhaps the chairman of the committee that selects personnel. The initial contact will usually not be lengthy unless the lay chairman or president evidences a desire to discuss matters of agency business. The social worker will ask for suggestions and, if any are offered, will en-

deavor to follow them. The chairman may wish the social worker to call upon certain other members of the board or may offer to accompany him on his first visit to the agency's office. The social worker will also inquire at this initial interview how and when he may establish contact with the lay chairman when need arises. In the early period of service in a new job it is usually desirable and often very necessary to consult the chairman frequently. Later, after confidence has been established and the social worker has become oriented to the job, these contacts may usually be reduced in number. Ordinarily the social worker should not undertake, on his own initiative, to discuss agency problems or his own plans and points of view at this first interview. Such discussions should be deferred, if possible, until the social worker knows something about the operations of the agency and has had an opportunity to appraise the points of view of all members of the governing body.

After contact has been established with at least one responsible member of the governing body, a visit is usually paid to the headquarters office of the agency. Here the social worker addresses himself to the executive of the organization. Sometimes the executive will have arranged a staff meeting in order that he may introduce the new director to the staff. In that case the incoming executive will perhaps be asked to speak. If this is the plan, he will acquiesce, but his remarks should be brief and should relate mainly to questions of broad professional concern rather than to his own administrative plans or to the developments he hopes to initiate in the agency. If the outgoing executive has already left the job, the new worker will usually be presented to the staff by the acting executive, by the state or district representative, or by the lay chairman of the governing body.

Frequently agencies arrange for a new executive to arrive some days before the departure of his predecessor. The purpose of this plan is to give the new executive an opportunity to profit by the advice and guidance of the outgoing worker. Although this arrangement is often helpful, it can become unprofitable if continued too long. Neither executive feels entirely free during this period to make independent decisions. The new executive, in particular, must be especially discreet. He must abstain from criticizing procedures he does not like. Until he has actually assumed charge, he must refrain from making administrative decisions and must scrupulously refer all questions to the person still in charge. He should also avoid giving gratuitous advice and should not compare local methods with those he has seen in operation in other localities. His immediate obligation is to learn and not to teach.

The new executive cannot hope to initiate immediately activities for

improved organization of the community. His first task is to be certain that the service program of the agency is operating smoothly. It is doubtful whether any social worker can inspire important accomplishments in community organization unless the staff, the board, and the community have confidence that the day-to-day job of the organization is moving along satisfactorily. Therefore, the first task is to study the operation of the program and to introduce such improvements as may be needed. These improvements should seldom be instituted in summary fashion or by administrative fiat. Questions will doubtless be brought to the executive for decision almost from the first day he is in office. Many of these questions do not require an immediate decision. In that case it is often best to say that the matter will be taken up in staff meeting or with the board. Both staff and board learn in this way that the new executive respects their judgment and that he seeks their participation in the policy-forming activities of the agency. Some questions, of course, must be settled at once. Even in such instances, however, it is usually desirable for the new executive, through informal clearance, to obtain the opinion of key members of the board or staff before reaching a decision. In seeking staff or board approval of a contemplated change, it is usually preferable for the executive to stress the positive gains the new policy will entail rather than to emphasize the weaknesses of the existing procedure. The latter approach might be interpreted as a criticism and might, therefore, give offense.

Soon after his arrival—if possible, within two weeks—the executive will wish to arrange both a board meeting and a staff meeting. Advance preparation for these meetings should be carefully made, following the method outlined in chapter iv.<sup>1</sup> In line with his desire to master the administrative problems of the agency first and to defer community organization activities until later, the executive should develop agenda that focus chiefly upon matters relating to the operation of the service program of the agency. Because he is new in the agency, however, he is in a strategic position to ask the board for the appointment of certain kinds of advisory committees. If there has been no case committee previously, for example, he may be able to indicate his need for guidance from a group already familiar with local problems. Committees appointed at this stage, however, should be small committees composed of persons organically related to the agency, such as board or staff members. The executive is not yet sufficiently familiar with local leadership to suggest inclusion of nonboard laymen. Later some of these committees may be enlarged, with the approval of the board,

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 157-60, 166, 169-78.

after it has been demonstrated that wider representation would be desirable. If cleavages exist within either board or staff, the executive will soon become aware of it. He should, in such a case, be at great pains to avoid identifying himself with either faction. Disagreements, if they are not personal in nature and if they reflect valid differences of opinion, are not without their values; but the executive is not in a position, as yet, to appraise the nature and extent of these cleavages. Later, when he knows local problems intimately, he may find need to present his own points of view, but this will be done on the basis of his independent analysis. At that time, with factual data to support him, he will be less vulnerable to the charge that he has thrown in his lot with one faction as against another.

#### IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Soon after his arrival in the community, the social worker should subscribe for and read the local newspapers. This advice is perhaps more important to those employed in rural or semirural communities than to those practicing in cities. Metropolitan dailies tend to be scanned, but rural papers are really read. Since editors generally give space to the things that interest their subscribers, the papers provide many clues that are of great value to the social worker. The officers of organizations that enjoy prestige in the community will be mentioned frequently in the local news items. The social worker will thus learn to associate with these organizations the names of people who are prominently identified with them. This information may be very useful later in compiling lists of individuals whose aid is to be sought in promotional activities. He will also find out what kinds of activities enjoy local support. If the Farm Bureau is an active force in the locality, its work is likely to be "played up." If the community is health-minded, the county nurse and the women's committees that sponsor her program will receive frequent mention in the local press. To some extent local newspapers may even reveal the ideologies and attitudes that enjoy local approbation. If there is hostility toward migratory laborers or if union labor is viewed with suspicion, the editorial comments may reveal these attitudes. Naturally, the newspapers never reflect the points of view of all of their readers. On the other hand, editors have an ear to the ground, and if a newspaper enjoys a general circulation in the community, it is ordinarily safe to assume that the editorials reflect points of view that have some substantial support among the readers and advertisers. This may not be true, of course, with respect to newspapers addressed to minority groups or specialized groups, such as a labor newspaper, a sectarian weekly, or a trade-paper. Such publications usually re-



flect the points of view of the group to whom they are addressed. Although these groups may constitute relatively small minorities in the community, it is, nevertheless, useful and important to understand their attitudes. Likewise, a paper of general circulation can scarcely ignore political feuds or other local political matters, which have, of course, very important implications with respect to the public social services. In short, local newspapers, even though they may print much that is trifling in character, are of enormous help to a stranger in acquiring a knowledge of local personalities, local interests, and local problems.

In addition, the habit of reading the local newspaper has another value. It helps to make the newcomer feel at home in the community. As was pointed out in chapter vii,<sup>2</sup> a knowledge of the history of a community helps the social worker to achieve an emotional identification with it. For the same reason newspapers, which record current history, help to break down the feeling that one is an outsider. To know what is going on, to become concerned about the outcome of local controversies, to develop a desire to know certain individuals and groups—these are the kinds of interests which are of help in seeking to strike roots into the community. Very few people can put their best efforts into community organization so long as they think of themselves as transients—here today and gone tomorrow. Hence every kind of activity or interest that helps the individual to feel that this is his community is indirectly and potentially a means of strengthening the attitudes and drives that animate his work.

#### INITIAL CONTACTS WITH OTHER LOCAL AGENCIES

As has been said, the first effort of the incoming executive will be to examine the service program of his agency to make sure that it is being competently administered. Probably his next step—which would be not only an administrative responsibility but also an initial venture in community organization—would be to make contacts with other social agencies in the community. In the case of agencies with paid executives, the approach should be to the executive rather than to the board. The purpose of the interview is to discuss treatment policies and interrelationships, and, therefore, the appropriate beginning is for the two persons with comparable status and similar responsibilities to explore their mutual obligations. The recently arrived executive wants to be sure that he understands correctly the intake policy of the other agency. If agreements already exist as to methods of refer and transfer, he wishes to confirm these agree-

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 246.

ments. If no such agreements have been worked out, he wishes to initiate discussions that will lead to the adoption of definite written policies on these matters. He also wishes to assure himself that there is a clear understanding in the other agency of the intake policies of his organization. Future troubles can be avoided by having clear-cut agreements on these points at the outset.

It seldom happens that all agencies in a community conduct their programs in accord with the best professional standards. Social workers may, therefore, frequently be tempted to deviate from agreements with other agencies with respect to individual cases. For example, the understanding may be that all applications from transients will be referred to one agency. It may be that this particular agency has no qualified case workers and gives no service beyond "a meal and a flop." A transient family patently in need of case work service may apply for assistance. The case worker immediately recognizes urgent problems that will not receive attention in the organization to which, according to the agreement, all such cases must be referred. Perhaps a member of the family, for example, appears to be in need of medical care. In such a situation there is a temptation to accept the family in spite of the previous agreement. This, however, would be a short-sighted action. In referring the family to the agency which serves transients, the case worker would undoubtedly attempt to suggest the need for medical care, and might even request permission to retain the family for a few days. But the case should not be retained for care except following complete clearance with the agency that has responsibility in the transient field. The issue here is one of community relationships, which potentially are of much greater importance than the individual case. If these relationships are ruptured through failure to observe agreements, all hope of improving standards may be lost. By preserving these relationships, the agency with good standards may eventually be able to influence the agency for transients and, as a result, improvements may be effected that will ultimately be of benefit to scores, or even hundreds, of families. Hence the executive, after he has discussed intake policies and similar questions with other social agencies in the community, should review his agreements in staff meeting with the employed personnel. Perhaps, in his first staff meeting, he apprised the staff of his contemplated discussions with other agencies and received suggestions from them as to weaknesses in existing agreements. In that case his later reference to the subject is in the nature of a report to the staff. In either case, however, it is important to make clear to the staff the importance of observing strictly the agreements with other operating agencies and to ask that, in any doubtful case,

a policy of consultation within the staff and clearance with the other agency be observed.

In the less populous jurisdictions, the number of social agencies is likely to be small, and those that do exist are usually manned exclusively by volunteers. Nevertheless, the very fact that such organizations are in operation is an evidence of interest, however primitive, in social welfare problems. Often the people who support these agencies are the ones upon whom the rural social worker must rely to awaken an understanding of social needs in the community. Hence the new executive includes these agencies in his list of early contacts. His approach, of course, is adapted to the background of the organization. Usually he will find himself in the presence of a busy man or woman who raises money for "charity work" or who receives and disposes of applications for aid so long as existing funds permit. There is seldom a central office. More often the chairman handles the work from his place of business or his home. Under these circumstances, professional phraseology is avoided. The executive expresses a desire to avoid duplication of effort. Hence he wants to explain what kinds of cases his agency accepts and to find out what kinds the volunteer organization assists. He may discover that no clear-cut policy exists or that the organization "helps those who can't get help anywhere else." If so, he accepts these statements and makes no attempt to persuade the agency to clarify its policies. Groups of this type are likely to have high regard for volunteer work and to entertain doubts as to the methods and purposes of trained social workers. Hence it is unwise, at the initial contact, to imply that there is need for improvement in the policies of the volunteer group. The first contact should ordinarily be limited to the accomplishment of two purposes. In the first place, an effort should be made to obtain permission to inquire about specific cases on which the volunteer organization may be active. And, second, an invitation should be extended to the volunteer organization to inquire whether cases in which they are interested have applied for, or are receiving, assistance from the agency with which the executive is identified.

There is danger that this initial contact with such groups may be the last one. The volunteer group will often ignore the invitation to clear cases. Hence, the executive must take the initiative in continuing the relationship. This is best done by inquiring about specific cases from time to time or by asking whether the organization would be interested in accepting certain responsibilities with respect to cases in which the professional agency is active. Sometimes, for example, the volunteer group will respond to a request for shoes for children and will interpret the request as

an evidence that the professional agency respects the volunteer organization and wishes to co-operate with its representatives. Efforts to develop a closer understanding should be continued unless it is clear that hostilities have developed which are not likely to yield or that potentialities for leadership in the volunteer group are not promising.

The new executive desires ultimately to know a great deal more about the other social agencies in the community than he is able to learn in these initial contacts. It is best, however, in the beginning, not to go beyond a discussion of division of the field and of such related questions as methods of transfer and refer. The newcomer who inquires about methods of financing the program, standards in family budgeting, and similar matters is in danger of prejudicing his own status by acquiring a reputation for inquisitiveness. Information that might be given reluctantly, or even refused, at an initial contact, may be quite freely disclosed after the executive has demonstrated his capacity to work harmoniously with other organizations. Ordinarily the first contact with other social agencies merely discharges an administrative obligation and provides the initial entries for the community abstract. The more important developments in interagency relationships will come later and will usually be carried out by the board.

After the executive has made initial contacts with other social agencies, he will ordinarily turn his attention next to other types of organized groups. First on the list will be those organizations which seem likely to have social welfare interests, or even some kind of social service program, such as fraternal and patriotic societies, women's clubs, men's service clubs, labor unions, churches, and the like. In some cases it will be necessary to make contacts with more than one individual to obtain the desired facts about a single organization. Normally the first contact will be with the president or chairman of the group. The head officer may have very superficial information, however, about the part of the program in which a social agency would have greatest interest. In one small city in the Middle West, for example, the Eagles lodge had built up a fund of more than \$20,000 through profits earned from boxing matches and similar events. This was known as the Eagles Shoe Fund and was presumably used only for the purchase of shoes for school children. A new head officer was elected by the lodge each year, but the Shoe Fund had been administered by the same chairman for more than a decade. In this case the head officer was able to supply many facts about the organization but was obliged to refer an inquirer to the chairman of the Shoe Fund for detailed information about the operations of that committee.

Sometimes it is difficult to obtain an interview with the president or chairman of an organization. Or the interview may prove unproductive because of a suspicious or indifferent attitude on the part of the head officer. A rebuff from one individual, however, cannot be interpreted as a proof that the organization as a whole is apathetic or hostile. The individual who happens to be head officer at the moment may not be at all representative of the points of view of the membership toward social welfare programs. Hence it may be desirable to make other contacts with the organization, if possible. The most promising procedure is to ascertain the names of committee members who are responsible for functions that appear to have some social service content. The Elks lodge may have a Christmas Basket Committee, for example, that functions only once during the year. Or a women's literary club may have a committee in charge of scholarship loans to young students. The social worker has a very natural approach to such groups and will usually not experience difficulty in establishing a common ground for discussion with them. If Christmas baskets are to be distributed, the social worker wants to know whether the committee will wish to clear the names with his files. If funds are now available for scholarships, the question will be whether the agency may feel free to suggest the names of promising children in families currently under care. The first interview with an organization has point and content if a common interest can be established and may then lead naturally into a discussion of other matters on which information is desired. The head of an organization, even though uninterested and indifferent himself, will seldom refuse to supply the names of responsible committee members with whom the social worker wishes to establish contact. If he does refuse, the social worker may be obliged to defer his plans until new officers are installed or until contacts can be established in other ways as his acquaintanceship in the community expands.

The contacts with organizations not specifically engaged in social service programs are, in the first place, designed to obtain information about them. Some of this information is descriptive in character, such as number of members, qualifications for membership, purpose, program, names and addresses of officers and committee chairmen. These are, in fact, the "face-sheet" entries for the community abstract.

But the initial interviews have other purposes also. One major purpose, as has been indicated, is to discover whether the organization has any function or program that would suggest an interest in social welfare problems. If so, the interview should center upon this interest or program in order that the social worker may obtain a basis for forming tentative

judgments about it. He wants to know how long the program has been fostered and whether it has functioned continuously or intermittently. He seeks to evaluate the quality of interest and intelligence behind it. Has the program been kept alive because of the devotion of a few members or has the organization as a whole been interested? Has the motivating drive been primarily religious, emotional, or intellectual? Does the work appear to have been done efficiently and with due regard to the dignity of those in whose interest it was undertaken? Is there evidence that at least some members of the group possess qualities of leadership? If so, what kinds of future contacts hold greatest promise of strengthening the agency's relationships with the group? Ultimately, on the basis of judgments of this type, the social worker may establish priorities among organizations. Since time is seldom available to do everything that needs to be done, it may be necessary to devote attention first to those groups that hold promise of response. Each group successfully oriented with respect to social welfare objectives may then, in turn, become a means of arousing interest in other organizations.

Another purpose of the social worker in arranging these interviews with organizations is to give them some information about the work of his agency. In any particular case the amount of information that can be given will depend upon the background and the attitude of the person interviewed. In many instances probably little can be done beyond explaining the kinds of cases the agency accepts. This must be done, of course, if there is a question of clearance or duplication between the two organizations. If there is no such question, the social worker may be able to introduce a discussion of his agency's intake policy by pointing out why he requested an interview. His board wishes all of those eligible for service to know where they may apply for aid. Since organized groups provide a promising means of disseminating this information, the purpose of this interview is to make sure that the agency's program and policies are understood. The impression should not be given, however, that the agency is "drumming up" business. Resources are limited, but within those limits, the agency seeks to meet the obligations it has assumed. In the case of an alert and interested individual, these explanations may lead to questions which enable the social worker to set forth in considerable detail the program and the methods of operation of his agency. Great care should be taken to give this information in such a way that it cannot be interpreted as a criticism of the work of any other organization. If there is evidence of real interest and understanding, the interview may also include some discussion of obstacles which the agency encounters in at-

tempting to carry out its purpose. In some cases it may even be possible to indicate that the agency may later develop some advisory committees and to request the suggestion of names of persons suited to serve in this capacity. Usually, however, it will be better to defer this request until better understanding has been established on both sides. Underlying each of these interviews is the desire to establish a relationship of confidence such that every organization contacted will feel free to make inquiries in the future, to refer eligible cases, and to consult the social worker concerning social service ventures which the organization may subsequently undertake.

#### DEVELOPING NATURAL CONTACTS

It is a sound policy to develop contacts in the community, in so far as possible, in the course of carrying out the day-to-day work of the agency. To go to the mayor, the president of the women's club, or the head of a labor union merely to introduce yourself is often very awkward. To go to such persons because you have specific business with them is natural and easy. Hence the social worker seeks to create opportunities to consult the individuals he needs to know.

Perhaps the local newspaper reports that the mayor has been asked by the servicemen's organizations to establish an information center for veterans and their families. This request indicates awareness of an unmet local need. Also it is a request that leads directly into complex social problems and involved interrelationships among voluntary and official agencies. Possibly the mayor may feel a need for advice from someone who knows something about the problem, and perhaps he does not know where to turn for such advice. If he is aware of his need for counsel, he will welcome an overture from the social worker. But the social worker must be prepared, at the first contact, to supply definite information, as, for example, by describing in detail how the problem is being met in some other community. Even if the mayor should feel no need for advice, he would usually, in any case, not resent the proffer of assistance.

Similarly, contacts for the purpose of transacting business can usually be developed with most of the important organized groups in the community. Perhaps the women's club announces its sponsorship of a series of educational forums. This announcement provides the agency executive with a definite reason to seek an interview with the president of the club. Perhaps he wants to arrange for his staff to be admitted to certain of the forums that will deal with problems germane to the agency's work. Or he might wish to ask whether the club would be willing to devote some of the for-

ums to subjects which the agency would like to have widely discussed in the community.

Sometimes cases arise in the agency which open the door to important new contacts with organized groups. For example, the agency may receive requests for assistance from certain families in which members or former members of labor unions are involved, either directly or collaterally. Even though these cases might be handled satisfactorily without reference to the union, the possibility of using the cases as a means of establishing contact with the union should not be overlooked—provided, of course, that such action would in no way jeopardize the interests of the client.

Contacts effected in this way through natural approaches will gradually establish the executive as a person who is eager to help with community developments and to give advice upon matters in which he is expert. One experienced executive reported a long list of contacts he had deliberately developed on this basis. It was remarkable how these relationships had fanned out into the community, with the result that many business and labor leaders and civic groups constantly consulted this executive about the problems of employees or fellow-workers, about appeals for subscriptions from unknown agencies, and many similar kinds of situations.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Advisory committees are potentially of great importance in advancing the community organization objectives of an agency. The new executive may find that he has inherited one or more advisory committees from his predecessor. In that event he will continue to work with these committees and will arrange to meet with them, if possible, within a month after he assumes office. His reaction to these committees may not be favorable. It is an obligation to continue to work with them, however, and to give them a fair chance to demonstrate their capacity. If, after a fair trial of six or eight months, it is well established that the advisory group has very little capacity, it may be wise to permit it to lapse. This should be done, however, only after careful thought and consultation. If the field representative from the state department or the national agency knows the community intimately, his advice should be sought. The chairman should also be consulted, and, if he so advises, the question should be discussed in a meeting of the governing body. The opinions of key members of the employed staff should also be considered. If there is wide agreement that the advisory committee is not performing its function and cannot be galvanized into activity, meetings should be discontinued. It is unwise, however, to set about immediately to organize a new group. To do so might



appear to be a rebuke to the former members. Moreover, the new executive should wait until he himself has made wide contacts in the community and is in a position to suggest the names of promising candidates. If a tradition of yearly appointments has been established, the committee should be held in suspense at least until the usual date for appointment arrives. In some instances an even longer lapse of time may be desirable. It is highly important that the change be made in such a way that antagonisms toward the agency do not develop.

#### DEALING WITH OPPOSITION

In most communities there is opposition, expressed or unexpressed, to social welfare programs. The new executive must be prepared to face this opposition. It is a mistake to conclude that opposition is always to be deplored. Some experienced executives believe that opposition is less objectionable than indifference; for opposition implies interest and may possibly be transformed into support, but indifference is an obstacle that often proves very difficult to overcome. Moreover, opposition sometimes entails positive benefits. In a rural county in the Middle West, the county relief committee appointed by the governor was completely inert and the paid executive directed the program with little or no local support or guidance. An organized group in the community suddenly demanded that higher scales of relief be granted to veterans than to other relief clients. The executive was unable to comply. Thereupon an attack was launched upon him, and his removal was requested. One local newspaper pressed the attack. The county committee, which had hitherto been very inactive, interpreted this development as a criticism of their work. They immediately rallied around their executive and thereafter played an active role in guiding the program in the community. The law of physics that "to every action there is an equal and contrary reaction" sometimes operates also in the field of human relationships.

The executive's attitude is one of the most important factors in dealing with opposition. He must realize that there is room for wide difference of opinion about most social problems and most social programs. Opposition may spring from bona fide intellectual doubts. It may also, of course, spring from ignorance, selfishness, or malice. But the assumption must always be that the complainant has honest and genuine doubts. If this assumption proves to be correct, explanations may cause him to modify, or even reverse, his position. Ignorance, too, may gradually be dispelled. And even though opposition springs from selfish or malicious motives, it is

usually soundest to treat it respectfully. Arguments seldom move those who are determined to cling to their prejudices. Hence the best policy, in dealing with such people, is to listen respectfully to their fulminations. Often they convict themselves by their own remarks. But, in any event, the "silent debate" of the listener who clings unmoved to his program and to the convictions on which it rests is more likely to impress the confirmed objector than any amount of voluble argumentation. Above all, the executive should strive to remain detached, tolerant, and receptive. If he becomes defensive and allows his own emotions to become involved, his capacity for dealing with opposition is usually seriously undermined.

#### THE ART OF COMPROMISE

Even in dealing with board and staff members whose general points of view are in consonance with his own, the executive will find that some important differences of opinion develop. Hence there is an art to be learned that has sometimes been called the "strategy of compromise." This art needs to be acquired by all who are connected with the government of the agency—board as well as executive and staff. Productive discussion usually modifies the views of all who participate in it. The new executive will doubtless have some original views he will wish to introduce into the agency. Ordinarily he should not overtly press these views upon the board. It is preferable that his ideas be evoked naturally in the course of discussion of the problems to which his own special hopes for the agency are related. Boards select an executive because they believe he has capacity, knowledge, and experience. Most of them invite the expression of the executive's opinions on matters currently under consideration. This is the kind of opportunity the executive desires; for opinions that are pressed upon the board may be resented but opinions that are invited may be the means of helping the board to stretch their imaginations and raise their sights. The reactions of the board will, in turn, often indicate a need for modification of the executive's original plans. All who share in this way in group thinking—board members and executive alike—must recognize that final conclusions will almost always be somewhat different from the original views of any of the participants. Hence very seldom is any individual justified in insisting that his own plans be adopted down to the last detail. A policy is more soundly based, as a rule, if it is a component of the various suggestions of those who have evolved it.

Sometimes boards ask their executives to formulate a plan for their consideration. Some executives maintain that, in fulfilling this assignment, it

is best to submit first a general outline only, leaving the details to be developed by the board or staff. They believe that this policy produces a better plan in the end and that support for the plan will also be more wholehearted if the board shares in formulating it. If the board specifically requests a complete and detailed plan, the executive can sometimes achieve a comparable degree of participation by including alternative provisions here and there, with a request that the board exercise a choice. In exercising this choice the board will sometimes develop original approaches that are different from the alternatives suggested. This is an outcome which the experienced executive will usually welcome.

#### PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

In almost any line of work an individual's effectiveness is very directly influenced by his state of mind. The lonely, unadjusted person seldom does himself justice in his performance on the job. Hence a basic obligation of the new executive is to acquire, as rapidly as possible, a feeling that he is "at home" in the community. This means that he must get satisfactions in his own life. Most people are gregarious and want to mingle with others. They wish to feel that they know people and are known—in short, that they "belong." Hence social contacts are important. Each individual must establish these in his own way in the light of the opportunities open to him. Some people may find that church attendance and participation in church activities provide a means of establishing congenial associations. Those who enjoy sports, such as golf or tennis, should arrange to indulge these interests. Many people have contacts in their former place of residence that will be helpful in getting established in a new place. If one is a member of a social or fraternal organization, for example, there may be a branch in the new location to which membership may be transferred. School friends and colleagues with whom one was associated in earlier positions may have relatives or friends in the new community and will gladly supply letters of introduction. An effort should be made to develop real interests that gradually build up in the new executive a feeling that "this is a good place to live."

As soon as it becomes natural to do so, the new social worker should think and speak in terms of "our" rather than "your." For instance, "I wonder if *we* could get *our* juvenile court judge to modify this decision" is a better statement than "I wonder if *you* could get *your* juvenile court judge to modify this decision." This kind of language should be used, of course, only after an "our" feeling has begun to develop. A simulated iden-

tification is dishonest and will presently be recognized as such. A patronizing attitude and patronizing remarks must always be avoided. Perhaps the new executive has come from a city in which higher standards and a more informed level of lay participation have been attained. If so, invidious comparisons will almost certainly not help matters locally. "In Chicago we did it this way" is the kind of remark that springs very naturally to the lips. But it is the kind of remark that should be avoided. If it is made too often, the local people will presently begin to dislike both the social worker and the city he so warmly admires. Inevitably, a question will be raised as to why the new executive ever left a place where standards and practices were so close to his ideal.

In many situations it is possible to ignore the community. The social worker may owe his appointment to the state, or his program may be financed in large part from funds not raised locally; or, even if the appointment was made by a local board, the members may think that the social worker has no obligations aside from handling the service program of the agency efficiently. In such situations the social worker may find it entirely possible to hold himself aloof from the community except in the limited areas in which the service program requires him to make local contacts. The social worker who adopts such a policy, however, will not be effective in community organization. He may be able to do a competent job in treatment, but when he leaves the community, it will be difficult to see where the total community pattern has been affected by his leadership. In the final analysis, maximum effectiveness in community organization is achieved only by knowing the community and by identifying with it.

Every individual likes to believe that his personal life is an area in which he is responsible to no one but himself. If he does his job competently, no one should criticize his tastes and habits or the activities he selects for his leisure hours. Plenty of logical arguments can be mustered to support this point of view. In actual practice, however, it is practically impossible for an individual to separate his personal life completely from the role he must play as a professional person in the community. This is true not only of social workers but also of other kinds of professional people, such as teachers, clergymen, and librarians. Even those whose practice is on an individual-fee basis, such as doctors and lawyers, are subject to boycott if their personal conduct offends the community. Some social workers have been known to insist upon their right to ignore local conventions and standards on the theory that provincial prejudices must be broken down. If they do so, they should recognize that they are giving

their own views on this question priority over the program they have chosen to direct. In general it is true that those who occupy positions of public trust are obliged to observe the standards of personal conduct approved in the community. This is simply one of the prices paid for the privilege of functioning in a capacity in which successful leadership is dependent upon the support and approbation of the group. Moreover, personal idiosyncrasies in dress or in conduct can easily constitute a handicap. A certain poverty-stricken county of the Far West was visited by a field representative from the state office, who arrived carrying a Pekinese dog under her arm. The reaction of the local people to this unimportant detail was astonishing. They associated the dog with a luxurious type of living totally unfamiliar to them. They found it hard to believe that a woman with such a background could appreciate the problems of their isolated and impoverished county. In short, a minor element in conduct aroused prejudices and hostilities which barred the path to the development of effective relationships. The social worker who is new in the community must exercise special caution in this area. Very few people would be willing to submit permanently to unreasonable infringements upon their personal liberty, but, on the other hand, very few would wish to jeopardize their chances of professional accomplishment by inviting criticisms needlessly.

In the final analysis the primary concern of the social worker arriving in a new community is to establish and cultivate promising contacts. Attention must be given first to contacts within the agency. The loyalty of the staff, the confidence of the clients, and the respect of the governing body are the objectives to seek first. The cultivation of relationships with other social agencies will also be undertaken during this period. Later other types of organized groups will be approached. By this time the social worker will have achieved a sense of security with respect to the operation of his agency and will have acquired some orientation with respect to community forces. He will then be ready to assemble additional data for the community abstract and to begin thinking of ways and means by which he may help the agency to strengthen its program of interpretation to the community.

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## CHAPTER IX

### PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

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THE gathering of facts is a sterile occupation unless the resulting material is made to serve a purpose. Too often, competent pieces of research have produced few benefits because the efforts to use them to obtain community understanding and group action have been inadequate. Fact-gathering and interpretation are therefore complementary activities; either is unproductive unless linked with the other. In preceding chapters the need for facts as a basis for social welfare planning has been pointed out. The present chapter will undertake to discuss the problem of interpretation as it relates to the use of these facts in community organization.

Several terms are in common use, all of which refer to this function of disseminating facts and directing their use toward the attainment of selected objectives. "Publicity" is the word which has perhaps been longest in use. Hence its connotations are widely understood, especially since it has long been the accepted expression in many fields of commercial activity. Its wide acceptance in commerce and business, however, has occasioned a reaction against its use in fields concerned with educational and other public service functions. Some of these fields have preferred to use the word "interpretation." However, there are some objections to this term also. For one thing, its meaning in this connection is not always fully understood by the public. Moreover, "interpretation" appears to carry a slight implication of condescension—that is, of the initiated explaining to the uninitiated. For these reasons there has been a tendency to turn increasingly in recent years to the phrase "public relations." This term has come into wide use not only in social service and educational agencies but also, increasingly, in government and in banks and similar commercial institutions. "Public relations" is perhaps somewhat less frankly descriptive than "publicity" but, in view of methods currently in use, is actually

more accurate; for efforts have gone far beyond the old-style publicity methods. Modern programs are based on a realization that the major problem is one of cultivating relationships and that "publicity" in the old sense is only one aspect of the function.

In the past, public relations work has been directed much too largely toward the raising of money. Doubtless this was inevitable. In many places private agencies were obliged to assume a very large proportion of the burden of providing certain social services in the community. Where this was the case the risk of raising less money than the minimum required to carry on the program was too great to be countenanced. It was necessary, therefore, to concentrate heavily on the kinds of publicity that produce contributions. Now, however, a very different situation exists. A network of public social services has been created, and, though these basic services fail to meet all needs, they do afford great relief to many private agencies. Private agencies are much more free than formerly to define and limit their own programs. Hence they are also more free to envisage a program of public relations that places increased emphasis upon promoting understanding of social needs rather than upon financing.

Formerly the private agencies were almost the only organizations in the social welfare field that attempted to carry on programs of public relations. A good many public agencies published annual or biennial reports, and a few made sustained efforts to interpret their work. A majority, however, made little or no contribution in this area. Now the entire situation has changed. Departments of public relations are fairly common among public agencies, particularly at the federal and state levels and in the larger local communities. Even in places where no employees can be assigned to this work, the regular staff members of the public departments are in many places fully aware of their responsibilities and opportunities and manage to conduct a competent program of interpretation. Since public agencies are not under the necessity of soliciting contributions, they are free to focus mainly upon broad programs of public education. The United States Children's Bureau—a pioneer interpreter of social needs—has for many years been instrumental in keeping child labor from dropping out of public view and becoming a forgotten issue. The public relations staff of the Social Security Board has performed an amazing feat in interpreting the complex provisions of the Social Security Act to millions of individuals throughout the country. At the local level the Chicago Housing Authority has demonstrated that a public relations department insures the steady growth of an understanding of some of the complex problems involved in slum clearance and rehousing operations.



Partly because of the pressure to raise funds, the publicity of an earlier period tended to be highly emotional in content. At present this type of appeal seems to have lost much of its force. One characteristic of our contemporary period is a heightened awareness of social responsibilities. Hence the bare statement of facts now evokes responses that formerly could be aroused only by playing upon the emotions. As a result the demand for facts has increased. Agencies that might once have dealt mainly in generalities are now concerned to document their statements and to provide accurate evidence that will speak for itself. This does not mean that emotion has lost its importance in influencing behavior. It means rather that emotions called into play by an appeal to intelligence appear to have produced more substantial and more lasting effects than those that do not rise above the tear ducts.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS STAFF

The provisions for carrying on public relations work differ from agency to agency. Some organizations are able to finance a full-fledged department. Where this is the case, it is important to establish close liaison between the director of public relations and the department of research or statistics. In some organizations the statistical service is an integral part of the department of public relations. Obviously, it is essential that an integration of effort be achieved through some type of organic relationship or periodic clearance. Otherwise, the facts for use in a campaign to be launched by the public relations department may not be gathered when needed; or the meanings of statistical compilations may be misinterpreted in the material prepared by the public relations staff.

A public relations staff of adequate size and skill, however, is still something of a rarity. Governing bodies seem to be reluctant to provide funds for this type of work. Most agencies consider themselves fortunate if they can obtain funds to employ just one person to develop public relations. In the case of many agencies with large budgets and heavy responsibilities in the community, this is undoubtedly a shortsighted policy. However, it is also true that even one full-time, experienced person is a great asset and can accomplish far more than can be managed by saddling public relations work onto those who carry other responsibilities. If it is impossible to employ a person for this work, the executive of the agency will be obliged to develop other plans. He may have to assume the burden himself. Or he may be able to organize a small committee of staff members who will map out plans jointly and will share the burden of carrying them out. Now and then some agencies are able to locate an experienced public relations per-

son who will work as a volunteer on a full-time or part-time basis. Paid full-time service is almost always preferable, however, if it can be arranged.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Regardless of the staff provisions that may be made to carry the burden of the public relations activity, it is usually very useful to have the assistance of an advisory committee whose members are selected on the basis of qualifications and experience. The most likely candidates are those who have had a wide experience in writing, in editing, or in supervising the layout of copy and those who have strategic contacts in the community. Such persons as editors, copy-writers, managers of advertising departments or agencies, managers of theaters and radio stations, and directors of public relations for banks and other business and commercial establishments are in a position to give concrete help. Moreover, though they may have little or no initial interest in the program of the agency, they can often be persuaded to serve because of their interest in viewing a new problem in their own field.

The social agency must have a realistic understanding of the kinds of service it can normally expect from the members of the public relations committee. Some of them may be willing occasionally to write copy. Usually, however, they limit themselves to the giving of advice. This advice, however, may be exceedingly useful. Some members may be willing to read copy prepared by the paid staff and to suggest improvements. Or they will examine the plans for a publication and indicate the kind of layout best suited to the material. They may have ideas on the kind of approach best adapted to appeal to certain specific groups. Their technical skills and their background of experience constitute a kind of insurance that the agency's efforts will not be invested in unfruitful undertakings.

The advisory committee on public relations may also be able to help the agency in establishing productive contacts. Sometimes a word from the right person will induce an editor to send a reporter to the agency to get a story. Radio "plugs," though more difficult to obtain, have in some instances been granted because an interested member of the committee was able to gain the ear of the proper official. Speaking engagements, too, can frequently be obtained through the influence of members of the committee. It may be embarrassing for the executive of the agency to ask a certain club to permit a board or staff member to address its members. A similar request from a well-known local layman will perhaps elicit the desired invitation. In a small city in the Middle West the manager of a chain of

theaters was appointed chairman of the advisory committee on public relations of an important private agency. The executive of the agency had some misgivings about this appointment. The individual in question was clearly not possessed of the ability to speak or write. Nevertheless, he proved to be a singularly good choice. His occupation brought him into frequent contact with reporters, advertising men, and others who are concerned to disseminate information in the community. Although he did not write articles or make speeches for the agency, he did assemble a committee of competent advisers, and he succeeded in placing copy prepared by the agency in a much wider variety of publications than had ever been reached before.

#### BOARD AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

If a public relations program seems to fall short of its objectives, it may be that the fault does not rest upon the public relations department. Success in developing productive public relations depends upon the cooperation of all who are connected with the agency. In a well-known children's agency a supervisor of home-finding was found to be responsible for most of the ill-will toward the agency that was discovered in a certain neighborhood. This supervisor took her job seriously and was a hard worker. She was obliged to make many contacts in the course of her work, to study the home situations of applicants for foster-children, and to accept or reject these applicants. She was apparently unable to make clear the reasons for her investigations, nor could she explain her decision to reject an applicant, without giving offense. Her lack of skill in these relationships was responsible for the development of unfriendly attitudes not only toward her but also toward the agency she represented. All staff members are constantly instrumental in shaping attitudes not only toward the agency but toward social welfare programs in general. The reason is that personal contacts are more potent in public relations than any kind of mass approach. Public relations experts know this and would in most instances use the person-to-person method of contact in preference to all others, were it not for the limitations which this method imposes upon the numbers who can be reached. The mass approach provided by radio or by the printed word is needed in order to achieve coverage, but the effect is known to be less potent upon specific individuals than can be attained through direct personal contact. For this reason the members of the board and the staff must always be considered the spearhead of any public relations movement. Unless *they* are creating understanding, the public relations department faces an obstacle that may be impossible to surmount.

## PURPOSES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

In any public relations program, at least three purposes should be kept in view. The most obvious of these is to disseminate facts. The agency knows certain things about social welfare needs in the community. It wants the lay public to be familiar with these facts also. Moreover, the agency knows what is now being done in an effort to deal with these needs, and it has some ideas as to what additional developments should be sought. It does not risk defeating its own purpose by trying to touch upon all these matters at once; but it does select certain key facts and, through frequent repetition, seeks to make them stick in the minds of its audience.

A more basic purpose of the public relations program is to modify attitudes. In an earlier day action was thought to be determined solely by stimulus and sensation. The finger was pricked, the sensation of pain was registered in the brain, and the action of withdrawing the finger ensued—so ran the explanation. Then it was noted that the same stimuli produce very unlike actions in different individuals. Evidently one element in the sequence had been omitted. The element omitted was attitude. Every individual harbors large numbers of attitudes and very often is totally unaware of most of them. But the nature of his actions is very largely determined by these attitudes; for attitudes are sets of predispositions, most or all of which are acquired as a result of life-experiences. Thus the British Union Jack is an emblem that presumably produces the same visual sensation in all who see it. But because of profound differences in attitudes, the actions inspired by the symbol would at present be very different among English sailors than among Indian nationalists.

The material used in a public relations program should therefore be selected with attitudes in mind. The appeal may be to already existing attitudes. For example, it is well known that most people have warm and sympathetic attitudes toward childhood. Hence material that touches upon these attitudes is likely to evoke a favorable response. If attitudes are known to be unfavorable, the material must be selected with a view to altering them. Very often this is done by associating the rejected factor with one that is known to be acceptable. Advertising experts have provided many illustrations of this technique. An unfavorable attitude toward the effect of tobacco on health, for example, has to a considerable degree been modified by presenting photographs of benign octogenarians or virile sportsmen enjoying their pipes. Sometimes if a negative attitude is deeply entrenched, it may be necessary to change terminology in order to overcome it. During World War I, British newspapers are said to have been bitterly critical of the treatment administered to soldiers at the

evacuation posts behind the front lines. In spite of repeated inquiries and reassurances, the criticisms continued. Finally the name of these stations, which, in the nature of the situation, were primarily for administering first aid, was changed from "evacuation post" to "evacuation hospital." Criticisms thereupon promptly died down. Similarly, the phrase "social work" was, in this country, substituted for "charities and corrections" because negative attitudes were believed to be widely associated with the latter expression. Likewise "orphan asylums" became "homes," "schools," or "halls"; and state "relief" administrations were re-named state "welfare" administrations.

Frequently the objective of a public relations activity is to create attitudes where it appears that none exist. This involves a dual problem. If there is no attitude toward a subject, it is safe to assume that there is no background of experience or interest to exploit. Hence the first problem is to attract attention. If this is done blatantly or unskillfully, a negative attitude may result. Frequently the most promising first step is to try merely to arouse curiosity or to create a desire for further information. After interest has been attracted, it is still necessary to present material that will build up a favorable background of experience, but this can seldom be accomplished except on the basis of continued cultivation. In other words, a single exposure to the interpretive materials commonly available can scarcely be expected to produce the desired results.

It is important to remember that attitudes tend to have emotional coloring. Hence, if an attitude can be touched by an agency's publicity, the material itself does not necessarily need to possess strong feeling tones. The feelings will be contributed by the existing attitudes if the material succeeds in reaching them. It is also worth noting that attitudes are very often associated with symbols, slogans, catch-words, pictures, and the like. The word "neighbor" has been very widely used not only in social work publicity but also in other areas, including international relations, because of the well-known attitudes associated with the term. "Be a good neighbor" and "the good neighbor policy" are expressions that are heavily freighted with content and are certain to evoke responses that carry with them a large measure of favorable feeling tone. The "lead," or opening, sentence of a news story released by a social agency was the familiar saying, "Well begun is half done." The objective of the writer was to start with a statement to which intellectual assent would be instinctively and immediately given. With this attitude of approbation as a starting-point, it was then less difficult to launch into the details, many of them unpleasant, of the case history he wished to present.

Pictures likewise evoke attitudes. The Statue of Liberty, the Capitol at Washington, the skyline of Manhattan, cattle knee deep in a lush meadow, a mother fanning a sleeping child—these and scores of similar pictures have been used in public relations work because it is recognized that they evoke attitudes and that these attitudes are not only widespread but also fairly uniform from individual to individual. Hence the hope is that they will serve as a sort of catalytic agent to induce favorable responses to the material that accompanies them.

Occasionally, attitudes may be created or modified by a single experience. For the most part this occurs only on the basis of an unusual or a highly personal type of experience. An individual who has had no interest in the Red Cross, for example, may develop an immediate and favorable attitude if a member of his family suffers injuries in an automobile accident and is promptly provided with much-needed first aid supplies from the Red Cross First Aid Station on the highway. Following the outbreak of the war in 1939, many people thus developed a very positive and friendly interest in the Red Cross as a result of obtaining news of relatives in war-torn countries through Red Cross channels or as a result of receiving letters from relatives in the Armed Forces describing personal services received from the Red Cross workers in the Army camps and Navy stations. In the great majority of cases, however, attitudes cannot be influenced to any considerable degree except on the basis of systematic and persistent cultivation. For this reason it is important not only to direct publicity toward the building of certain attitudes but also to plan the program in such a way that there will be continued emphasis on the objective selected. Because of the great importance of attitude, many observers believe that a "broadside" directed toward "the public" is less productive than a series of restricted undertakings, each addressed to a specific group. In the latter case it is usually much easier to appraise existing attitudes in advance and to select materials that are directed toward them.

Although the disseminating of facts and the modifying of attitudes are perhaps the immediate purposes of public relations work, there is also another purpose which may in some cases be immediate and in other cases remote. This is the desire to motivate. A foundation is laid by circulating facts and by developing a receptive frame of mind. But all this is done in order, sooner or later, to induce action. Appeals for contributions commonly illustrate this desire to inspire a concrete, positive response. The letter of appeal, which usually gives facts and strives to appeal to favorable attitudes, is accompanied by a subscription blank which reads: "I

desire to help abolish child labor in Illinois and therefore inclose a contribution of \$——." The contribution would not be made unless facts concerning the need had been presented and a successful appeal had been made to the underlying protective attitudes toward children. But, in addition, some kind of material must be included that provides suggestions or opportunities for releasing the feelings thus evoked. Such materials constitute the motivating element in the approach.

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Methods of interpretation change constantly. Changing tastes make some methods seem definitely "dated." Compare the annual report or the appeal letter of today with those of two decades ago, and a sharp contrast will be noted. Improvements in mechanical equipment no less than changing tastes are responsible for these developments. Material can be reproduced today by means wholly unknown or very imperfectly mastered a comparatively short time ago, and other innovations, such as television, are doubtless on the way. But if methods of presenting materials change, certain principles in the field of public relations remain unchanged. Regardless of the means now in existence or of those to be developed in the future, a few guiding tenets can be identified which seem likely to be permanent.

It is clear, for example, that any data used in developing the public relations program of a social agency must actually be facts. Lacking the means to assemble data, social agencies in the past have sometimes resorted to dogmatic assertions or unproved generalizations. Sometimes, even when facts were available, the data have been misinterpreted. A common manifestation of this fault is the resort to hyberbole. "Thirty needy families were restored to happiness yesterday when each received a bulging Christmas basket from the X Club" is perhaps not an actual misstatement of fact. It does, however, represent an extravagant type of assertion. Very few experienced agencies would today be guilty of publishing such statements, for they know that the average layman, though he may approve of Christmas baskets, will not believe that one such gift would be able to "restore to happiness" a chronically poverty-ridden family. In the long run, skilful and persistent use of facts produces better results than any number of arresting assertions; for the facts gradually build up intellectual conviction, whereas assertions ordinarily carry weight only with those who personally know and respect the author of them.

It is not always possible, of course, to prove truth by an appeal to facts.

In the field of human relationships there are many intangibles which may be difficult to identify and appraise. "Increased provision for public playgrounds in X District has effected a marked decrease in the rate of juvenile delinquency" is one of the statements that fall into this class. Most people would doubtless be inclined to believe that the one development was responsible for the other. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove absolutely that a definite cause-and-effect relationship exists. This is because many other factors enter into and affect conduct. Improved incomes in the district, meaning more money for food and amusement, may remove the temptation to steal. The departure of "gang leaders" from the area may destroy a major baleful influence. On the positive side, churches and schools may become more active. These and many other factors are operative in influencing behavior, and it is always hazardous to try to isolate and measure the effect of any one of them.

This does not mean, however, that no use can be made of an observed correlation. It means merely that assertions should be properly qualified, as, for example, in the following paragraph: "Increased provision for public playgrounds in X District has been followed by a marked decline in the rate of juvenile delinquency. In the five years prior to this development the rate was —; in the past two years it has averaged only —. The principal of the X District School today expressed a belief that the improvement may in large measure be ascribed to the leisure-time programs developed in the new playgrounds." The data contained in the first two sentences above are facts which can be proved by an appeal to the records, assuming, of course, that the statistics have been compiled on a sound and comparable basis throughout the period. The interpretation placed upon these facts in the third sentence is couched in language that contains appropriate qualifying terms. Obviously, the individual quoted is in a position to make firsthand observations, and for that reason his opinion carries considerable weight. In the long run, statements thus qualified are likely to gain a more respectful hearing than those which, though in need of qualification, are asserted as if they were incontrovertible facts. Those who resort to the latter approach attribute to the general public a degree of naïveté which experience fails to justify.

Generalizations are important and necessary, and social agencies are in a better position to make them with respect to social welfare problems than other groups in the community. But it is usually soundest to avoid unsupported generalizations. The statement "Children in the slums of this city are undernourished" is doubtless true, but it is also a generalization within the limits of which wide variations may prevail. Hence it is desir-



able to implement this statement by reciting concrete facts that support it. Some supporting evidence may be provided by giving a case history. Perhaps the heights and weights of the children in a specific family will be compared with the norm. The family income may be cited and typical menus described. These and similar facts about a particular family group will add vividness to the narrative. But inevitably the intelligent reader will wonder whether this family is the exception or the rule. Hence there is also a need for facts that will answer this question. Usually the answer may be most easily provided by including some statistical summaries. Perhaps the data have been derived from school health records or from a sample study of certain districts. In any case the source will be given in order that the reader may know how broad a base underlies the generalization. Figures will also be supplied, such as average weight of the children studied, average consumption of milk per child, average income of the families, etc. The data selected will indicate that the specific case cited was not an isolated instance and that there is a substantial body of proof to justify the generalization.

With respect to most social phenomena, a wide variety of facts may be collected. Hence a second principle in public relations is that careful selectivity must be exercised in marshaling facts for public consumption. "Two hundred Negro boys belong to the W Avenue Branch of the Y.M.C.A." is a statement of fact. "Two hundred Negro boys, 12 to 15 years of age, most of them born in this city, caught their first glimpse of Lake M today when they arrived at the Y.M.C.A. summer camp to spend a two weeks' vacation" is also a statement of fact. But the two statements differ considerably in importance. The first statement would probably not be used in the public relations program. It might be important to indicate that the agency serves Negro boys as well as white boys, but, in that case, the information could undoubtedly be given in a form much more vivid than the one used above. Whether the second statement is useful in its present form would depend upon the purpose to be served. Certainly it has greater potentialities than the statement about members. If the intention is to convey information about the agency's summer-camp program, this might be a satisfactory "lead." The statement does arrest attention and might induce the reader to peruse the entire article. If, on the other hand, the purpose is to direct attention to the privations suffered by boys in the Negro district, the "lead" is unsatisfactory because it diverts attention immediately to another subject—namely, the efforts made to compensate for these privations.

Out of the wide range of true statements that might be made about almost any subject, the agency must first select those that appear to have a bearing on the purpose immediately in mind. Facts that do not bear directly on this purpose must be excluded, however important and vivid they may be in their own right. Indeed, a vivid fact not related to the central objective is more damaging than a drab one, for it has greater power to distract attention from the central purpose. After data have been carefully excluded in accordance with this principle, a further combing is necessary. The various facts relating to the immediate purpose not only will vary greatly in intrinsic importance but will also differ in the degree to which they are adapted for use. Thus average cost per meal and average daily caloric content of meals are both items that relate to the central purpose, if that purpose is to show the extent of malnutrition in a certain district. If both averages prove to be low, the first (average cost per meal) is much better adapted for use than the second; for it is a concept that is easier to grasp than "caloric content" and it ties more directly into the knowledge and experience of the wide audience to which the information is addressed. The average cost per meal, however, may not be low. Perhaps the problem is one of unwise selection of foods. In that case "average daily caloric content" might be one important datum to use. The problem then would be one of assembling facts that interpret caloric content in terms widely understood and related to common experiences.

A third well-authenticated principle in public relations work is that facts must be presented in a way that is not offensive. This may appear to be a negative rather than a positive principle. Nevertheless, it is a principle that needs to be emphasized, particularly since, in the field of social welfare, it is so often necessary to deal with material that is unpleasant or even revolting. Merely to omit what is unpleasant is not a suitable solution of this problem. Sometimes the unsavory data are the most convincing. The problem is to find words, pictures, drawings, or statistics that will convey the facts without offending the sensibilities of the group addressed. In the case of very sensitive people, positive emotional harm may result from exposure to gruesome material. Thus a photograph of a young man strapped in an electric chair, which was used in a campaign to prevent juvenile delinquency, was undoubtedly a bad approach. The purpose was to arouse a desire to participate in a movement that would prevent such developments. But the horror which the picture induced was such that some people merely recoiled from the brochure and threw it away. As a rule it is better to use words rather than pictures to convey unpleasant facts. Moreover, the pictorial material can

often be selected to present the positive objectives sought. Thus the number of infants blinded by congenital syphilis may be stated as a fact. But instead of presenting pictures of blind babies, it would be better to use a photograph or drawing of a normal, happy infant and a caption indicating that the program seeks to substitute prevention and normal development for the passive acceptance of a preventable evil.

An appeal to prejudice is likewise a breach of taste that will, in the long run, do more harm than good. Among other things, it will alienate those who admire fair play. "The X agency doesn't ask a hungry man to fill out a lot of blanks before they feed him" said a certain organization in a printed request for contributions. This was a direct appeal to prejudices, for the average person has a very negative attitude toward "red tape." Moreover, most people have been exposed to stories of charities that investigate so long that the aid finally granted proves to be "too little and too late." Instead of attempting to secure participation in a necessary and constructive program, this agency sought merely to get money. The implied criticism of the methods of other agencies will tend to crystallize vague reactions into definite disapproval. People will assume that if a social agency says these things about delays and red tape, there must be some substantial basis for the criticism. This conclusion, even though unexpressed, will linger in the minds of many people and will condition their responses to future appeals.

Except in very unusual circumstances, the interpretive material circulated by social agencies should be expressed in very clear and simple terms. Occasionally, if a document is to be submitted to a small specialized group who already have an understanding of the subject, it might be possible to deviate somewhat from this basic rule. But, for the most part, even such groups must be approached in nontechnical terms. It is always revealing to discover how many persons there will be, even in a small, well-informed group, who fail to grasp the meaning of subject matters that may be somewhat new to them. Hence a fourth safe rule is to phrase and to present all public relations material so clearly and simply that the average man or woman will have little or no difficulty in comprehending it. Since most of us find it easier to deal with concrete data than with abstract ideas, it is a corollary proposition that individual case histories, numerical data, and specific facts are usually more effective than moral judgments, general propositions, or closely knit arguments.

This does not mean that a solid factual diet will produce the desired results. Some of the earlier annual reports of state departments of welfare erred in this respect. Page after page of solid statistics, unrelieved by

textual comment or illustrations, provided almost positive assurance that the operations of the organization were secure from any widespread public analysis. Figures should be used, but ordinarily they should be used sparingly. Also it is well to bear in mind that most people can remember round numbers only. Thus if an investigation has indicated that 19,787 transients requested assistance in a given state during a recent month, it may be best, especially in speeches, to round this total off to the nearest thousand and say that 20,000 transients applied. Some of the audience will remember the figure 20,000 and will mention it in conversations with their friends. Very few, if any, would be able to recall the exact figure, 19,787. In most informal and relatively brief pieces of publicity, it is more effective to mention only a few important figures than to include a detailed statistical analysis. Then one or two specific case histories and perhaps a few interpretive comments may be added to endow the material with reality and to suggest possible meanings. Furthermore, a good balance among the various kinds of materials is a safeguard against monotony.

Choice of words is likewise of great importance in achieving vividness and clarity. A great many social agencies publish figures on the numbers of "cases" they serve because the "case" is the unit in terms of which the work is done. But the word is less meaningful to most people than the word "family." Although "individual" is preferable to "case," it, too, is perhaps less appealing than "family." Both in group work and in case work a good many psychological and psychiatric terms have come into common usage. These terms, however, are not widely used among laymen. Hence, most of them should be avoided in addressing laymen, and the necessary explanations should be given in ordinary language by use of circumlocutions and of illustrations. Simple expressions that have feeling tones are usually much more effective than formal phrases. Thus the statement "The sick mother was unable to prepare three meals a day" has much greater warmth and appeal than "The illness of Mrs. S. interfered with her routine domestic responsibilities." In the final revision of any public relations material, it is a good investment of time to look for substitute words and phrases that would enhance the simplicity and the warmth of the approach.

Another well-recognized principle in the field of interpretation is that effort should be focused upon one objective at a time. It is easier to enunciate this principle than to observe it. Innumerable needs are constantly crying for attention, and many of them seem to be equally urgent. Moreover, some of these needs seem to be inextricably interrelated. It is al-

ways difficult to see how one can be advocated without at the same time calling attention to another, and yet there is convincing proof that to scatter one's fire is to destroy the aim. Many years ago two devoted women in a certain state became greatly concerned to correct grave deficiencies in the state program for care of the mentally ill. They saw that enlargements and improvements in the mental hospitals were needed and that, in addition, a preventive program of mental hygiene should be undertaken. After working out a complete program, they went to the state legislature with all of their plans and proposals. The magnitude of the scheme and the cost it would entail immediately frightened many legislators. Year after year this experience was repeated, and conditions in the state remained substantially unchanged. As a matter of fact, after twenty years of importuning the state legislature, these two women found that their entire program remained still to be adopted. Perhaps this would have been true in any case. But experience suggests that some headway might have been made if, at the outset, the effort had focused upon a single objective, such as the remodeling of one state institution. Then, perhaps, one definite accomplishment might have paved the way for another. The experience of the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness lends weight to this hypothesis. A decade ago this organization mapped out a legislative program which they hoped to see adopted within ten years. They started out by working for the enactment of one specific bill. Not until this measure had been passed was the second one brought forward. A recent session of the legislature witnessed the adoption of the last of their proposals. Leaders in the organization believe their success was due in part to their early decision to focus upon one thing at a time. Sometimes, of course, it may be wise to discontinue active promotion of one measure in favor of another that is less vulnerable—especially if the *order* in which a program is fulfilled is of minor importance. In such cases the first measure is allowed to drop from view temporarily in order not to detract from the second; for the wisdom of concentrating at any given time upon a specific and limited objective has been repeatedly demonstrated in many kinds of settings.

#### SELECT THE AUDIENCE

In addition to these principles that rest upon definitive bodies of experience, there are certain directives that are useful guides in developing a public relations program. For one thing, it has generally proved useful to give careful advance study to the group that will be reached by any given interpretive effort. What are the dominant interests in the group? Can these interests be related in any way to the material which the agency

wishes to present? Would it be effective to quote one of the leaders in the group? If so, which member has greatest influence? If a speech or an article is directed to the American Legion, for example, would it carry weight to quote the chairman of their child welfare committee? If so, an advance interview must be arranged, and an effort must be made to obtain a quotable statement. When this approach is used, it is usually wisest to state frankly the purpose of the interview and, if possible, to reduce to writing the statements that will be quoted. In this way the danger that the quotation might later be repudiated may be avoided. Sometimes the group may have pride in the work it has accomplished in a field related to the social agency's purposes. In that case a reference to these accomplishments is desirable, especially if it can be made in such a way as to indicate the kinship between the purposes of the two organizations.

Even though the group to whom material is addressed has no committees working on social welfare problems, a quotation can, nevertheless, often be introduced effectively. For example, a family welfare agency with a legal aid bureau was described by the president of the local bar association as an "organization with the biggest and one of the best law offices in the state." The leaflet in which this statement was quoted was mailed to all members of the local bar association. Since the president of the association was a person of distinguished reputation in his field, other lawyers might reasonably be expected to be influenced by his opinion of the agency's program. Similarly, a leaflet that is to be distributed in unionized industries may be more widely read and remembered if an outstanding labor leader is quoted.<sup>1</sup>

The compiling of a mailing list is in itself a means of selecting an audience. The first step is for the agency to define clearly the objective it wishes to attain. It then seeks an answer to the question: What group or groups in the community might be directly or indirectly concerned to see this objective reached? If an answer to that question can be found, the agency will then know where it wants to turn in assembling a mailing list. Often organizations will supply lists of their members on request or will even agree to inclose some of the agency's material in one of their own regular mailings. In other cases it may be necessary to buy a list of names from firms engaged in supplying them or to compile one in the agency office from local telephone or city directories. The time thus invested in "defining the audience" usually pays dividends. Material addressed at ran-

<sup>1</sup> Social agencies usually insist that their publicity materials carry a union label, indicating that the printing was done in a union shop.

dom to the general public is scarcely ever as effective as material addressed to specific groups whose interests can be appraised in advance.

#### ERRORS TO AVOID

There are two negative directives that should be kept constantly in view. One is "Never belittle another agency, even by implication"; and the other is "Do not transcend the bounds of good taste in competing for attention." Some agencies forgot the first of these injunctions in the period of economic depression of the 1930's. Public agencies were at that time expanding at an unparalleled rate, and some private agencies feared that their own status in the community was in jeopardy. Among statements designed to assist private agencies at that time was the following, which appeared as an editorial in a newspaper: "We can't successfully transfer our responsibility as neighbors to the government, for in such affairs the government is awkward and wasteful. It spends our money extravagantly, because it is unskilled and undiscerning. Through other channels we can do better for ourselves and our neighbors." A leaflet prepared for distribution in connection with a campaign for contributions contained this statement: "Federal and state aid just keeps the unemployed and their families alive. This aid, to use an illustration, is but rescuing thousands from drowning, only to leave them weak, exhausted, and friendless at the water's edge." Those responsible for these statements doubtless had no wish to impair confidence in the public social services. They had their eyes focused upon their own needs and forgot that whatever is harmful to one branch of social work ultimately reacts unfavorably upon the entire field. In a field as highly segmented as social work, it is difficult at best to build public understanding and public confidence. Anything that shakes this confidence with respect to one part of the field inevitably raises questions as to whether other parts of the field may not be equally vulnerable.

The large number of causes constantly competing for public support inevitably underscores the importance of catching and holding attention. In fact, unless some success is attained in this area, the whole public relations effort is likely to be unproductive. Because it is so necessary to attract attention, there is a constant temptation to resort to the spectacular and the novel. As a matter of fact, novelty, variety, and vividness are desirable attributes in many parts of the public relations program. They should not be purchased, however, at the expense of good taste. Doubtless it is impossible to define "good taste" in any way that would be of practical service. And what might be good taste in one setting might defi-

nately be bad taste in another. Perhaps the best safeguard against committing a breach of good taste is to test out material in advance on a small group of critical consultants. If an effective advisory committee on public relations has been organized, this might well be one of its functions.

#### IMPORTANCE OF "CARRY-THROUGH"

One directive all too often overlooked in public relations work is to make sure that people are properly thanked for the co-operation they extend. Social workers are paid for the professional services they render in the community. But when busy laymen labor to advance social welfare objectives it is ordinarily only because they have a sense of social responsibility and wish to contribute to the improvement of community provisions. Many people are peculiarly sensitive to the responses evoked by the voluntary services they perform. They feel slighted if their efforts are ignored. Hence care should be taken always to extend thanks for the work they have done. In some cases an acknowledgment from the executive of the agency will be sufficient. In other instances the executive will be well advised to prepare a letter of thanks for the signature of the chairman of the governing body. The recipient of the letter should be made to feel that his services have been recognized and acknowledged by a person whose position in the agency or in the community is commensurate with the importance of the services contributed.

Likewise the co-operation extended by public officials should not be forgotten. Not long ago a well-qualified social worker in an important post was removed from her job to make way for a patronage appointment. A private agency intervened and organized pressure in an effort to get the social worker restored to her position. As a result of these pressures, the governor of the state was moved to take a hand in the matter and the situation was promptly straightened out. It would have been very easy, once the objective was attained, to let matters drop there. But the agency that had been active in inducing the governor to intervene never overlooks an opportunity to improve public relations. Various prominent citizens throughout the state were asked to write to the governor, thanking him for what he had done. Presently the governor was in receipt of communications that could leave little doubt in his mind as to the importance attached to his action by a considerable group of people who occupied positions of influence in the state. Likewise, the expressions of appreciation he received from the agency, both personally and through the press, undoubtedly strengthened the organization's contact with him.



## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

## PUBLIC WELFARE REPORTING

Private agencies, if adequately financed, usually enjoy considerable latitude in developing their public relations programs. Some of them can and do make frequent use of pamphlets, posters, broadsides, and other kinds of releases and disseminate them widely throughout the community. Public agencies seldom have quite the same degree of freedom in developing their programs of interpretation. Nevertheless, they can make very useful contributions of an educational nature, and many of them are devoting increasing attention to this aspect of their job. Some publish monthly bulletins and newsletters. These are often highly informative and useful, and, though they are not usually presented with a view to attracting attention, there is evidence that many of them have built up substantial audiences. Tax funds are now disbursed by public social agencies in very large amounts. People who formerly paid little or no attention to poor relief are now concerned to understand these large new expenditures. Hence public welfare reporting has assumed new importance in the field of public welfare administration.

Perhaps the most familiar document in public welfare reporting is the annual, or biennial, report. In many jurisdictions such reports are required by law, particularly at the state level. Even in places where periodic reports are not compulsory, as, for example, in some counties, it is nevertheless desirable to prepare and circulate them. Those in charge of public welfare programs are in a position of stewardship and should feel a sense of responsibility to provide the community with opportunities to evaluate their performance. Moreover, an annual report is potentially an important medium for advancing the public relations objectives of the agency.

There is some confusion as to the purposes an annual report should serve. Ordinarily a public department operates directly or indirectly under some elected official or officials. Hence the report must contain information that will be helpful to these officials. If, for example, the charge is made that a certain public institution is overcrowded, it should be possible for the elected official to answer the charge by consulting the report and finding there the figures on bed capacity and population. Reference to earlier reports, especially at the state level, will indicate that many of them were prepared with this one purpose in mind. As a result they tended to consist chiefly of very detailed statistical tables. Reports of this type may make detailed facts readily available, but they may also be so lacking in material of general interest that they have a very restricted appeal

It is an obligation to make the basic facts available for the use of legislative and administrative officials, but it is also important to obtain the widest possible hearing throughout the community.

Because it is desirable that the report serve these two purposes, various kinds of compromises have been worked out. In some jurisdictions two reports are issued. One is a formal, detailed document that is, in effect, primarily a financial and statistical summary of operations. The other may be an abstract of the formal document, giving a few basic figures only and interspersing these with narrative materials and illustrations. The latter is written with a view to enlisting public interest and is ordinarily more widely distributed than the detailed report. In some places, in addition to the formal annual or biennial report, an informal monthly or quarterly bulletin or newsletter is issued, sometimes printed and sometimes in mimeographed form. Where this is done, the informal publication is primarily designed to promote the public relations program of the agency. Elsewhere an effort has been made to prepare one report that will serve both purposes. This has been done by introducing innovations in format and content. Such reports are usually brief, often running only to about one hundred pages. This represents a triumph in condensation, since the earlier annual reports frequently were weighty volumes that contained several hundred pages.

The new style of public agency report tends, above all, to be "readable."<sup>2</sup> Good paper and large print are used, and often very interesting photographs are included that illustrate the service program of the agency. The number of statistical tables and financial statements has been sharply reduced. A few "resource" tables are usually given in an appendix at the end of the volume. The text itself ordinarily includes only a few summary tables that are presented in connection with an accompanying textual discussion. Emphasis is placed upon material that will enlist interest. Case histories are included in an attempt to illustrate both the service of the agency and the nature of the social problems with which it deals. Interpretive sections provide an opportunity to discuss problems confronting the agency and the community. Plans for dealing with these problems may sometimes be explained. An administrative chart and a "flow" chart may serve to clarify the structure of the organization and to

<sup>2</sup> Following the outbreak of war, paper shortages necessitated curtailments in annual reports. Hence, for examples of the modern types of reports, see annual reports for the pre-war years (ca. 1935-40) of such agencies as the Social Security Board, Department of Social Welfare of New York State, Department of Welfare of New York City, State Department of Welfare of Alabama, etc.

show how it operates. The "teaching" function of the document is kept constantly in view, both in the selection of material and in the methods used in presenting it.

Although decisions with respect to the number and frequency of reports will differ from one jurisdiction to another, the broad purposes sought will be very similar everywhere. These purposes may be stated in various ways and with varying degrees of detail, but in general most of them are expressed or implied in the following list of objectives:

1. To show what the agency has accomplished
2. To describe the agency and its functions
3. To suggest the relationship between the work of the agency and the well-being of the community
4. To analyze problems currently confronting the agency and the community
5. To indicate plans for the forthcoming year
6. To account for funds spent
7. To provide data that will enable the community to evaluate the work done

These purposes are not mutually exclusive. A single piece of material may relate to two or more of them. Nor does the sequence of the objectives listed above have any particular significance. The order and the organization of the report must be determined by the nature of the material available. Moreover, a report is not necessarily defective merely because it contains little or no material bearing on one or another of these objectives. Sometimes it may be unwise or impossible, for example, to discuss plans for the ensuing year. Or it may be impracticable to include each year a detailed description of the agency. Perhaps some social workers will find the following statement, which emphasizes the time element, a more useful definition of the objectives of a public welfare report than the list suggested above: The purpose of an annual report is to inform the responsible officials and as many of the lay public as possible where the agency stood at the beginning of the period, what it has done, tried to do, and failed to do during the period, where it stands at the end of the period, and what it hopes to accomplish in the ensuing period.

The executive of the agency is responsible for the preparation of the annual report. This does not mean, however, that he actually writes the entire document. In many agencies there are strong reasons for sharing this task. The most obvious one is that the executive, though he must hold himself responsible for what goes into the report, often is too pre-

occupied with other duties to undertake an extensive piece of writing. A more important reason, however, is that good personnel administration implies the placing of responsibility in the hands of subexecutives. Thus, if an agency is departmentalized, the executive might ask the head of each department to hold himself responsible for the section dealing with his function. The superintendent of the county infirmary, for example, would be asked to submit the section on indoor relief and the head of the department of Old Age Assistance would be requested to prepare the material relating to his division. Presumably the entire problem of preparing the report would be discussed in staff meeting, and agreements would be reached as to contents and methods of presentation. In large agencies the subexecutives might also go over these plans with the workers in their departments. An important by-product of this type of procedure is that it automatically occasions a review and analysis of departmental operations by each responsible subexecutive. Annual reports prepared in this way commonly consist of sections or chapters, each relating to a specific function and each appearing over the signature of the subexecutive responsible for it. In addition, the opening section is an overall review of all operations and plans, which is, of course, prepared, and signed, by the executive.

In small agencies the entire report is often prepared by the executive. The material may or may not be presented in chapters. If the agency is responsible for more than one function, however, it is usually desirable to divide the material along functional lines. Thus, by use of subheadings, the Old Age Assistance program may be discussed in one section and the outdoor relief program in another, even though administratively both services are in the hands of the same small staff.

The plans for the annual report should be formulated well in advance. Ideally, preparation should be continuous. That is, if there is agreement at the beginning of the year as to general content, material fitting into this plan can be earmarked for inclusion as it arises in the course of operations during the period. This reduces the rush of last-minute preparation and is also a safeguard against the omission of important material which arose early in the period and has since been forgotten.

The body of a public agency report is usually preceded by a formal letter of transmittal. This is signed by the executive and is addressed to the responsible governmental official under whom the agency operates. The letter of transmittal should ordinarily be brief. Usually it merely cites the statutory authority under which the report is issued and indicates the exact period covered. If, for some reason, the letter of trans-

mittal is omitted, the exact dates of the period covered by the report may often be conveniently incorporated in the title of the document.

#### CONTENTS OF ANNUAL REPORTS

Although the annual report is commonly divided into sections according to subject matter (Outdoor Relief, Aid to the Blind, etc.), the material that goes into the sections and into the over-all summary is made up of the following elements: (1) financial data, (2) statistical data, (3) case histories, and (4) narrative or expository analysis. This means that, in the writing of any section, consideration must be given to the relative importance of the materials available in each of these four areas.

In many jurisdictions there is a prescribed uniform method of book-keeping and accounting which all governmental departments must use. Although this is advantageous in many ways, it limits the discretion that may be exercised in presenting financial data. It is of great importance that the financial data included be easy to understand. If the agency is obliged to include financial statements that are difficult for the uninitiated to interpret, it is better to present them in an appendix as a resource table. Then, in the body of the report, a few simple data relating to income and expenditure, average costs, and the like, may be presented, possibly in expository paragraphs rather than in tabular form. As a matter of fact, it is usually not wise in any case to include exceedingly detailed financial tables in the body of the text. Such material tends to give the text a very formidable appearance. This does not mean that financial data are unimportant, nor does it mean that something less than an honest and reasonably complete summary of fiscal operations is acceptable; it means merely that some choice can be exercised as to where this material is placed. Broad classes of facts, such as total expenditures, total administrative costs, and the like, should normally be presented and discussed in the main body of the report. But the detailed breakdown of these items, such as monthly expenditures, salaries paid to various classes of employees, etc., are really resource tables and properly belong in an appendix where they will be readily available to all who are interested in them.

In addition to some selected figures relating to fiscal operations in the current year, it may often be advisable to include a few supplementary financial data in the main body of the report. Trend figures, for example, are usually of considerable interest. People wish to know whether expenditures have been mounting or declining. Sometimes comparisons with other communities are also very useful. Frequently they provide a convenient point of departure for discussing such matters as standards of

relief in the community, amounts available for administration, salary standards, and the like. Certain derived figures, such as percentage change or average amounts of relief granted, often lend themselves to informative discussions. Financial data usually can be simply and effectively presented in graphic form. The trends in expenditures, administrative costs, and allied "time series" are easy to present as line graphs; and comparisons may frequently be emphasized by the use of bar charts or pictograms.

As in the case of the financial data, considerable discretion must be exercised with respect to the selection and placing of the statistical data. The purpose of the material on finances is to show what was done with the money. The purpose of the statistical data is to show what service these funds provided. Service data should therefore be reasonably complete. Many of the tables, however, are not suitable for inclusion in the main body of the report. They serve their purpose better if presented in an appendix. Monthly figures on case load by districts or a geographical distribution of cases by townships, for example, may have some importance to a few readers. Most people, however, will not be interested in these details and would be annoyed to encounter them in the text. In general, lengthy cross-classification tables belong in an appendix. The text of the report should ordinarily include summary tables only—and only those summary tables which contain material sufficiently significant to warrant textual comment.

Most statistical material is designed to throw light on one or more of the following aspects of the service program: (1) volume, (2) trend, (3) unit costs, (4) characteristics of the case load. "Volume" refers to the amount of service rendered or the number of cases served during the current period. The total figure is often broken down into its constituent parts, as, for example, the number of cases that received outdoor relief, the number that received old age assistance, etc. Trend figures reflect the movements or fluctuations in the service program over a selected period of time—for example, the total unduplicated number of families aided during each year of the past decade. Unit costs are derived figures that result from relating one set of facts to another. A familiar unit cost figure is "cost per day's care," which is found by dividing the total expenditures of the service by the total number of days' care provided during the period. Figures showing the characteristics of the case load usually distribute the client group in terms of descriptive categories. The categories may be numerical, as, for example, age groups or monthly earnings of the breadwinner; or they may be nonnumerical, as, for example, color, sex, or country of birth. Trend figures may be shown with respect to any of these classes of facts.

A table may be presented, for example, indicating whether the number of Negro clients has been increasing or decreasing; or data may be set forth indicating the fluctuations in unit costs.

If figures are available, it is important to include statistics that help to show the extent and character of unmet needs. In some organizations, for example, applications are investigated and accepted but are placed on a "waiting list" because there are no funds to provide the service. Or applications may remain in a "pending" category for long periods of time because the staff is too small to undertake the necessary investigations promptly. Figures of this type are not difficult to compile, and it is only fair to the community and to the client group to make them a matter of public record. Other data relating to unmet needs may result from special studies or from material assembled from the agency's case records. If the agency has asked its workers to record certain kinds of facts of this character, it is wasteful not to tabulate and present them. Emphasis may have been placed, for example, upon housing conditions in the client group or upon the health needs of children. The workers who have participated in the recording of these data have a right to expect that their contribution will be utilized, and the agency itself, once it has acquired pertinent information, is under obligation to share its knowledge with the community. Moreover, a fundamental purpose of the annual report is to advance the community organization objectives of the agency. Hence a special effort should be made to weave into the document some material that will relate to the specific objectives which the agency is seeking to attain in the development of group provisions.

Because statistical tables can do so much to make or mar the effectiveness of a report, a few additional directives with respect to their use may prove serviceable. An early step in the preparation of the annual report is to scrutinize all available statistical material carefully to decide what to tabulate. After these tabulations are ready, some will usually be discarded because they prove to be less significant than anticipated or because their inclusion would detract from the central issues which the report will emphasize. Those retained for use in the report should then be divided into two groups: (1) tables that will be the subject of textual comment and (2) tables that will be included in the appendix. These groups are usually, but not always, mutually exclusive. Sometimes the text may include comments on tables that appear in the appendix only, in which case an appropriate reference to the table appears as a footnote on the page where it is discussed. The tables will next be arranged in some logical order and numbered consecutively. A suitable plan is to number the text

tables 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., and the appendix tables A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, etc. The order of the tables will be determined by the sequence of subjects adopted in organizing the report. Obviously, no general rule can be suggested that would prove to be a suitable sequence for every report. One common plan, however, is to introduce first the tables that deal with broad general classes of facts, such as total expenditures, total case load, and trend in case load. After the general framework has been outlined in this way, the more detailed classes of facts are discussed, such as changing racial composition of the case load, average number of days' care given, occupational distribution of the client group, average number of cases per worker, etc.

It is seldom, if ever, advisable to include tables in the main body of the report that are not to be mentioned in the accompanying text. Ordinarily, each table in the text should be introduced with appropriate explanations and should appear on the page on which it is introduced or on an immediately adjoining page. The interpretations of the table follow. Sometimes added meaning and vitality can be achieved by introducing a case history that illustrates the principal facts in the table or the most significant interpretations suggested by it. An adequate body of comment, interpretation, and illustration intervening between tables is a safeguard against producing a document that will repel readers by its apparently formidable emphasis upon statistics. The use of graphic materials, such as charts and pictograms, in lieu of tabular presentation, will also help to reduce "reader resistance."

In all fields of social science it is very often impossible to obtain strictly accurate data concerning a given subject. In such cases it is necessary to decide first whether the data are so defective that they are not serviceable. Half a loaf is usually better than no bread, and sometimes defective data throw some light on subjects concerning which no information would otherwise be available. If doubts are entertained concerning the completeness, accuracy, or validity of the figures, however, care must be exercised to include appropriate qualifying reservations. Nothing more quickly undermines the confidence of readers than to encounter figures containing patent discrepancies or to identify assertions not justified by the supporting evidence.

The financial and statistical data in the report describe operations in a detached, impersonal way. The judicious use of case histories will bring this material to life. In presenting case histories the identity of the clients must always be protected by using fictitious names and by altering identifying details. The summaries must be brief and should be limited as strict-



ly as possible to the facts needed to illustrate a pertinent point in the accompanying text. As suggested above, a significant case history will often serve to emphasize the meaning of a statistical table. Likewise, an effective case summary will underscore the points set forth in the sections devoted to narrative or expository analysis. Care should be taken, however, not to fall into a monotonous pattern. If a case history is introduced routinely in connection with each major point, the repetitiousness of the treatment tends to weaken its effectiveness.

An emotional treatment of case material is not appropriate in public welfare reporting. In the past, some agencies, particularly in the private field, believed that an emotional emphasis was essential. But the best private agencies nowadays are very careful to present case materials with great restraint; and public agencies seldom, if ever, resort to emotional overtones. It has been generally recognized that vividness can be achieved without pathos and that a patent assault upon the emotions may often defeat its own purpose. Very few agencies today would use case material of the type illustrated by the summary entitled "Moving-Van Man" (Doc. 9-A). This history is objectionable, of course, on more than one score. The emotional appeal is of a character that will repel many readers. Moreover, the summary accomplishes very little in the way of interpretation. Presumably the purpose is to inspire each reader to emulate the moving-van man and to "do his bit" too. Little or no light is thrown, however, upon the service function of the agency. Nor is any information given about the social problem that an eviction case illustrates. Also the summary does not "motivate"—it does not leave the reader with a desire to do something. Thus, for several reasons, this particular summary rates low in effectiveness. It is cited here, however, mainly because it provides an illustration of the way in which choice of words, as well as content, can lend an objectionable emotional tone to case material. It should be compared with Document 9-B, which may perhaps be almost too matter of fact in tone. Nevertheless, the case history in Document 9-B leaves a much more favorable impression than "Moving-Van Man." The reader is given some concrete information about the nature of the problem and the way in which it was attacked. He sees that the agency is on the job and is trying to do what it can in a bad situation. No effort is made to heighten the emotional appeal by introducing such phrases as "the wan face of the mother" or "the father's despairing eyes." The facts are permitted to speak for themselves.

Levity is, of course, no less objectionable than extreme emotionalism. A condescending tone and patronizing phrases are also to be avoided. For

this reason, among others, it is seldom advisable to try to simulate dialects or foreign accents in quoting clients.

In general, the secret of success in the use of case histories is to be found not in the rhetoric employed but in the selection of material. There is no dearth of appealing material or of case summaries that illustrate vividly the programs of agencies and the nature of the social problems with which they deal. The real test of skill, therefore, is in identifying the cases that have potentialities. The most effective case summaries are those in which the plain statement of the facts is sufficient to carry the desired message.

The narrative and expository analysis in the annual report often provide the most direct opportunity to interpret social needs. Let us assume, for purposes of illustration, that the agency's policy with respect to payment of rent for clients has changed several times during the course of the year. The successive policies will be outlined and the reasons for their adoption indicated. The effects of these changes will be evaluated in so far as facts permit. Perhaps some pertinent statistical data may be available, such as monthly fluctuations in evictions. If so, any correspondence between these fluctuations and the agency's changing policies will be noted. A case history may be used to illustrate the impact of these policies upon clients. The present status of the situation will be indicated, and plans for the future will be outlined. An interpretation of the year's experience will be offered, and an effort will be made to suggest the needed improvements in community provisions that these experiences suggest. The entire purpose of this description and analysis is to share with a wider public the understanding which the agency itself has attained as a result of its continuing contact with a specific problem.

Perhaps it is not an overstatement to say that the most vital material in an annual report is usually contained in these expository sections. Certainly, no other section has a more direct bearing on the community organization objectives of the agency. Hence, as has been pointed out in another connection, the principle of selectivity must be brought into play. Since it is not possible to arouse concern about a large number of objectives at once, it is necessary to focus effort upon a selected few. The expository passages, no less than the statistical tables and the case histories, must be directed toward the clarification of these few major objectives.

The report should be placed in the hands of newspaper editors a few days before it is distributed in the community. It may be desirable that this be done by a layman in an official position, such as the chairman of the governing body or a member of the advisory committee on public relations. Some important newspapers, including the *New York Times*,

quote extensively in their news columns from the official reports of both public and private agencies. Occasionally in some papers the news story relating to the report may be supplemented by editorial comment of the type illustrated in Document 9-C. If the newspaper notices appear just before or just after the report is circulated in the community, many people who might otherwise ignore the document will be moved to read it.

Although the foregoing discussion has been directed toward public welfare reporting, it is, in the main, equally applicable to private agencies. It seems clear that the major contribution of the private agency in the future will not consist in providing a community-wide service. The major contribution seems likely to be in accelerating the process of community organization. Hence educational and demonstrational activities will undoubtedly receive increasing stress. The importance of having these developments understood in the community scarcely needs to be underscored. In discharging this responsibility, many private agencies will doubtless be able to discover and to point the way to new and improved methods of interpretation. Their opportunities in this field are large; for they can usually exercise greater latitude than public agencies in using their resources to test hypotheses.

#### OUTSIDE RESOURCES

The growth of public relations activities in social work inspired the organization in 1921 of a national association known as the National Publicity Council for Health and Welfare Services.<sup>3</sup> The membership includes both individuals and agencies. Social workers who find themselves charged with responsibility for developing a public relations program will be well advised to examine the services available through this council. In addition to publishing a periodical entitled *Channels*, the organization issues special bulletins on interpretation and maintains a critical editorial and advisory service. In a number of communities, local councils of public relations workers have also been organized. About twenty of these local councils are affiliated with the National Council. Some of them carry on very active local programs. Another source of help to which the social worker may turn is the National Conference of Social Work. At the annual meetings of this organization, some sessions are regularly devoted to discussions of public relations problems in social work. As a rule, most of these papers and discussions are subsequently published in the annual *Proceedings* of the Conference. Some state conferences hold meetings of a similar nature at their annual conventions. In addition they sometimes offer short

<sup>3</sup> This organization was formerly called the Social Work Publicity Council, Inc.

courses or institutes on public relations problems in the two- or three-day period preceding the opening of the annual meeting. The development of these and other opportunities to exchange experience suggests that there is a widespread and growing awareness of the role of an effective public relations program in implementing the fundamental purposes of social work.

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DOCUMENT 9-A  
MOVING-VAN MAN<sup>4</sup>

He was a big, burly fellow, with a heart of gold. The X—— agency visitor had called up the office to say she had just had a family referred to her whose goods had been put on the sidewalk for nonpayment of rent. Would he drive his horse and van right over to pack the things into it so as to save the family further ignominy?

The X—— agency visitor gave him the address and said she would meet him there in fifteen minutes. After they had met and the furniture was safely deposited in the van, the question arose—Should they take it to the warehouse and store it for a while, or what?

The moving-van man said in *his* opinion it would be better to "move the stuff right into some new rooms." The X—— agency visitor said she agreed but she would have to hunt for a suitable place, and meantime, what would he do with the goods? "Tell you, lady," was his reply, "you just start along lookin', and I'll drive the horse and family slowly after you wherever you go, and when you think you've hit on the right place, we'll move 'em right in, then and there, so they'll be all fixed up."

So the procession started. Two or three places were inspected and the moving-van man was consulted as well as the family. Finally, on referendum vote of all hands, a new tenement home was selected and by 6 o'clock the family was installed.

"Naw," said the moving man, he didn't need extra pay for the hours the hunt had consumed—he "guessed he could do his bit too!"

<sup>4</sup> Reproduced from a mimeographed document entitled "A Brief Course in Social Work Publicity," which was issued in 1932, by the Community Service Society of New York and the Department of Social Work Interpretation of the Russell Sage Foundation.

DOCUMENT 9-B  
THE A—— FAMILY<sup>s</sup>

The municipal health visitor called our attention to the A—— family which she was visiting, the mother and two children having been reported as tuberculous. Mr. A. is in regular employment but earns only \$8.00 per week. There are six dependent children, and the whole family lives in three small rooms. A tuberculous child was occupying a bed with another, as yet free from the disease, while the husband and baby were in danger of becoming infected by sleeping with Mrs. A. The family were referred for advice to the local antituberculosis dispensary, and the doctor urged that the mother be sent at once to the country and the two delicate children to the infirmary for treatment. To enable Mrs. A. to go away, arrangements would have to be made for the other small children. A relative offered to take one, while the others were to be boarded out.

But misfortunes never come singly. Mr. A. himself fell ill. He had to go to the hospital and then to a convalescent home, so that the mother could not be spared from the home until his return. The little boy and girl are to be admitted at once to the infirmary, and Mrs. A. has been able to improve her sleeping arrangements, but her own treatment has had to be postponed.

<sup>s</sup> Adapted from Helen Bosanquet, *Social Work in London, 1869-1912* (London: John Murray, 1914), pp. 114-115.

DOCUMENT 9-C  
LESSON IN CITIZENSHIP<sup>6</sup>

What an aroused group of citizens can accomplish toward solution of a civic problem is illustrated in the annual report of the Women's Joint Committee on Adequate Housing, representing 18 city-wide women's organizations with a membership of 150,000. Other organizations which wish to learn the technique of substituting action for discussion should study this 16-page document.

Although the committee concludes that "we are still at Dunkirk" as far as solution of the housing problem is concerned, during the last year numerous forward steps were taken as a result of its persistence. Upon its petition, for instance, Mayor Kelly increased the number of plumbing inspectors in the Health Department from 8 to 31, with the result that 3,000 complaints long dormant in the files "came alive."

The committee's continued activity resulted in 350 cases being prosecuted during the first five months of 1942, whereas the average number of prosecutions annually before its formation was from 7 to 10.

By assigning 69 women to maintain a rotating weekly attendance at Health Department hearings in Municipal Court, "as trustees of the interests of society," the committee became conversant with court procedure.

No wonder that one chronic violator was heard to remark that he "wished these so-and-so women would stay away from court."

<sup>6</sup> Editorial from the *Chicago Sun*, July 31, 1942.

## DOCUMENT 9-D

### NINE POINTS ON INTERPRETATION OF SOCIAL WORK<sup>7</sup>

In an annual report of its Committee on Interpretation, Harry Becker summarizes nine conclusions reached by the Nebraska chapter in a meeting held in February, 1939, which was planned by the committee:

1. The emphasis in all interpretation should be on the presentation of the philosophy of social work.

2. It is social work and not social workers which should be interpreted.

3. Social work should be interpreted to a community on the basis of fundamental principles and not on the basis of the personality of the social worker.

4. The social work *problem* should be presented to the public rather than the program.

5. The contribution of social work in meeting community social needs and problems should be stressed.

6. Publicity does not always mean interpretation. A social work job well done is the best method of interpreting the skills of social work.

7. Social workers should feed material to key community people in order that community leaders may understand and know the contribution of the profession of social work in meeting community problems.

8. Social workers must be sold on the job they are doing and the contribution social work has to make to that job.

9. Close contact and participation in A.A.S.W. activities is an important responsibility of social workers if we are to develop a common understanding and have common goals.

<sup>7</sup> *Compass*, February, 1940, p. 16.



DOCUMENT 9-E

LETTER<sup>a</sup>

May 25, 1938

Mrs. —  
County Welfare Director  
Grant County  
Ulysses, Kansas

I received a letter yesterday from Bryant O. Jones, asking me to send to you a report on the general subject of "Interpretation of Social Welfare Work in Rural Areas" and asking me to have this in your hands by the end of this week. . . .

First, in regard to planned publicity and interpretation for any county, perhaps the most beneficial method is the use of mimeographed letters, which, in a small community, can cover a lot of ground. These letters, if not written carefully, can seem quite stiff and can do little if any good, but if written in a conversational manner and with the personal interest of the citizens at heart, I believe can be quite successful. They create a feeling of friendliness and evidence the fact that the program in operation is something that it is the privilege of all to know and to ask about. I found so many wondered but were hesitant to ask. I shall endeavor to mention just a few things I tried to cover from time to time in these letters in Wichita County.

It was always of interest to show the itemized expenditures handled through our office, especially in the way of a yearly report, and in doing so I showed the actual value received for the amount spent. In other words, the county direct assistance or categorical assistance was shown, as well as figures, as nearly accurate as possible, as to the amount received in the county in the way of W.P.A. and N.Y.A. wages and F.S.A. grants. These amounts were then compared with the actual cost to the county taxpayers. This particularly appeals to merchants in a small community, for in these communities they rely a great deal on this turnover of money. I know that last Christmas one of the merchants there mentioned the fact that his trade was very little, but that he was quite sure things would be a lot better for him when the men got their "checks." In this instance he

<sup>a</sup> This letter was written by Harold F. Baker, a county director of welfare in a rural county in Kansas. It was prepared in response to a request for information concerning methods of interpretation used in that county.

was referring to the checks handled through the Farm Bureau. But by helping them to realize the number of ways in which the money provided by the federal government stimulates their business, I believe we created a more friendly feeling toward the office and the program in general.

It was also of interest to the citizens to be given information regarding the variations in the case load, whether up or down, and the reasons for these variations. Also, the people in the county evidenced interest in the actual operation and administration of the W.P.A. and N.Y.A. They were interested to learn that these services were administered through the state office at Topeka, but that the county had some control over the certifications to these projects and over the actual determining of eligibility on the basis of need rather than on the basis of political affiliation. Also along this line, we made quite clear our rules and regulations regarding the prohibiting of any political affiliation by the workers in the welfare office, even going so far at times as to quote letters received from the state office. We also tried to make known the definite qualifications necessary for the personnel. We also stressed our need for accurate and honest information from clients and from citizens in order to help us in our verifications and to speed up the assistance needed by clients.

In these letters we veered from the subject at times and made an appeal for magazines or clothing, and accepted anything like that regardless of how little value it might have. That might seem a very minor thing, but it created an opportunity for the public to come into our office and to have a feeling that they had a definite part in the program. Perhaps it also made them feel good that they were able to help and that we manifested our appreciation of their help. Also, we encouraged the groups that give baskets at Christmas and Thanksgiving time and worked with them. In most cases we tried to suggest eligible persons to these people but asked the groups to deliver the baskets themselves because they in that way got to see the homes and the actual need and also had a little sense of personal achievement.

But, going back to the letters again, we held open discussions regarding appeals and the lien law, and, in fact, everything that we had ever been asked questions on, whether in the office or on the street. These letters went out about every six weeks to a large cross-section of the entire county, including merchants, farmers, and retired persons. We also sent the letters to the clients who, in our opinion, were able to understand.

Another valuable means of interpretation was the newspaper, in which we carried a series of questions and answers. We invited anyone to mail in or hand in questions which were pertinent. The newspaper co-operated

very nicely in this after realizing that the readers were interested, and often we had more questions than we could actually handle. We tried to limit these in each issue of the paper to six or eight questions, and we, of course, refused to discuss any individual case that might reveal the name of the family.

Another valuable means of interpretation was provided by our close co-operation with any service club or charitable organization that the community might have. In our case it was the Red Cross, which was our only such organization. These meetings were not only for the obvious purpose of interpreting the program. They also afforded an opportunity to let these groups know we wanted to try to help them work out their problems and to show them how they might be able to spend some money helpfully and yet legitimately within their limitations by sponsoring some special project such as glasses, tonsillectomies, or other such services. In our particular case they turned over two hundred dollars to us entirely for tonsillectomies and merely asked that we keep them informed as to the persons to whom this service was going, so that they might keep track of their money. They, of course, were always glad to discuss the particular family's need with us, and in this way they felt, it seemed, that they were sort of helping us do our case work, which certainly created a definite interest.

These three means of interpretation are, I believe, the main sources for planned publicity—the mimeographed letters, the questions and answers in the newspaper, and the meetings with groups.

There are so many varied means of interpretation of welfare activities in day-to-day work that it is rather hard to mention all of them. I think, to sum it up first and discuss afterward, I would say that the main thing is to be "one of the boys" as it were—that is, to make the community feel that you are not above them and to be held in awe. I know that, as hard as I might try when I first went out to Wichita County, I could not seem to break the ice. I realized this the first time I went to one of their community sales. The second time I went, I wore corduroy trousers and an old leather jacket with holes in it and took a fishing pole, and from there on out I made a lot of friends. I found quite often that I could carry on my best conversations with persons in the community on the top rail of the fence, surrounded by the bawling cows at the community-sales pavilion in town. In that environment the people felt quite at home, talked freely, and asked really intelligent questions, whereas in my office they were always reluctant to open up. That may seem a very simple thing, but it seemed to count quite a bit. It was also interesting to know that the people appre-

ciate a person's taking time off from work to attend a community sale or some special event sponsored by the Legion or perhaps to go to a football game in the neighboring town to root for the home team. In a larger community, if a person did this, he would doubtless be considered to be shirking his work. However, I found that any time I attended any of these special events, I probably did more interpreting than at any other time.

Sometimes it is difficult to take time to answer these questions which were constantly asked, especially on a Saturday afternoon after a tiring week's work, but all of us tried always to do this. Also, we tried to take time to identify the misunderstandings prevalent in the community—especially those not openly expressed. Then we would try to introduce these questions in our conversations and give an explanation. In dealing with our clients, if they made impossible requests, we not only refused but explained why, and, of course, this was always passed on to others and curtailed the number of such requests. In purchasing material of any kind, we tried to stress the "trade at home" idea whenever at all possible, and this always appealed to the business firms. The welfare board became more interested daily in their own job when they found others were interested in what they were trying to do and were not only criticizing but were perhaps also offering a little sympathy and co-operation and assistance when possible.

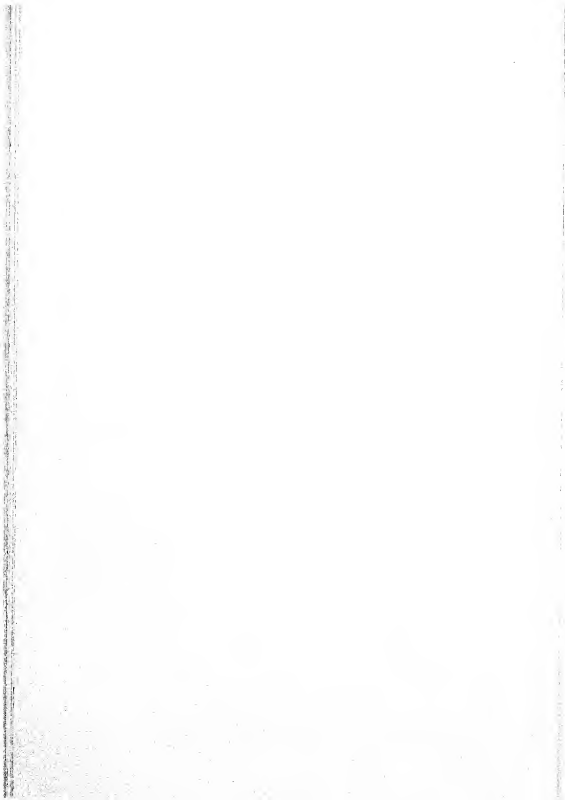
As a result of this interpretation, we found that people were coming into the office or to us individually with their problems or with the problems of friends. On occasions they even came to us with the problem of someone they knew or of some relative in another county. Many times I am sure that we saved other counties embarrassment by explaining that the plan they had in mind was not the way the thing could be done. This interpretation also tended to limit the number of ineligible applications and brought to the community a realization of the immensity of the work. It also definitely limited the amount of impatience felt toward our program and restricted the amount of political infringement upon our office by typical small-community political groups.

There is not time or paper to say much more. The problem of interpretation of the program and its administration and operation is definitely different in small rural communities than in even a medium-sized rural community, and I would say, offhand, much more interesting.

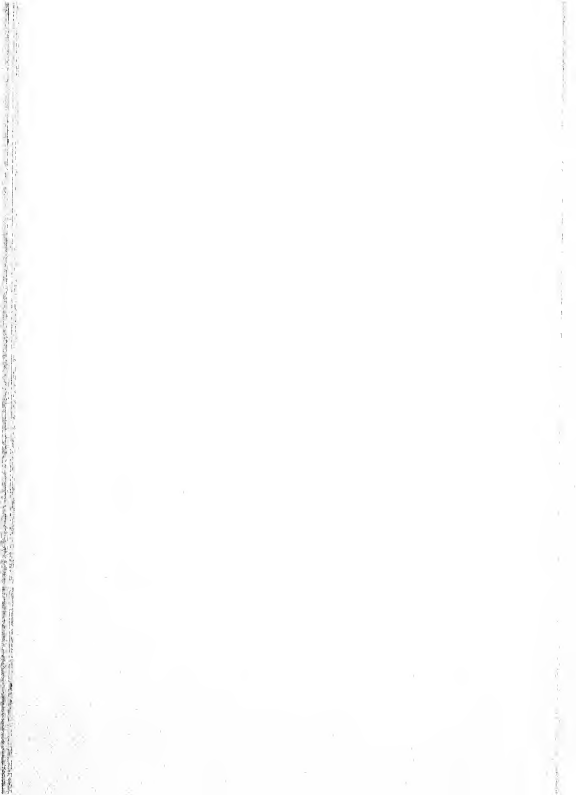
Very truly yours,


[Signed] HAROLD F. BAKER

*County Welfare Director*




PART II  
STRUCTURE





## CHAPTER X

### CO-ORDINATING AND PLANNING AGENCIES



IT IS instructive to examine the directory of social agencies in a large city. It requires a sizable volume to list the organizations that carry on social programs in the community and to include brief descriptions of their activities. In populous communities the number of agencies runs into the hundreds. Even in cities of less than 200,000 population it is not uncommon to find that from fifty to one hundred public and private agencies are carrying on active programs. The "lush growth of American charities" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is responsible for this confusing pattern. Very few people can be found who believe this extreme segmentation of social work administration is desirable. In the main, social work has developed in haphazard fashion, without benefit of advance over all-planning. If it had developed, like public education, with a few basic objectives in view, the organizational picture would undoubtedly be very different today. But it has been necessary to discover many of the objectives themselves through experience gained in attempting to relieve immediate and urgent suffering. Hence, though there are reasons and explanations for this situation, it is not difficult to understand why a contemporary writer was moved to say that the field of social work is "the most chaotic and disordered division of human affairs."<sup>1</sup>

In rural sections the number of agencies carrying on active programs is, of course, smaller. Nevertheless, a list of these organizations is often surprisingly long. In a middle western county of 18,000 population, a recent count revealed twenty groups carrying on social welfare activities. This included a few societies that functioned rather intermittently under the exclusive guidance of volunteers. It also included some work that was carried on as an adjunct of other responsibilities. Cases of juvenile delinquency, for example, were handled by a judge whose major duties were in

<sup>1</sup> Alvin Johnson, "In This World of Ours," *Survey*, LXXIII, No. 7 (July, 1937), 211.



other fields. A majority of the agencies in the list functioned under public auspices; for, in creating new social services, legislatures have often given little thought to the possibility of integrating them with existing programs. In this particular county, for example, almshouse care, old age assistance, outdoor relief, and child welfare services were each administered by a separate organization. Hence, even in this small county, the average lay citizen might have some difficulty in understanding the work of all the existing agencies.

Although the number of organizations functioning in rural counties may be small, the problem of co-ordinating their service and planning activities is often difficult. In cities a long experience has demonstrated the need for working together, and the agencies are likely to be aware of their responsibilities in this regard. In rural areas the agencies often are very individualistic and resist the kind of self-discipline that co-ordinated activity implies. Moreover, the planning aspect of social work is frequently difficult to promote in rural areas. Often there is no agency with a clear mandate to exercise leadership in this field, and, as a result, what is everybody's business ends by being nobody's business. The need for planning exists in rural areas, no less than in cities, but is often much less immediately apparent to local laymen. Some rural agencies may undertake planning activities that are related to their own programs. Joint planning by all agencies is much more rare; and a planning organization that is really representative of the community and that is concerned with a broad approach to the social welfare problems of the entire area remains largely an objective to be realized in the future. The co-ordination of existing services may likewise be very imperfect in rural areas and may consist only of informal arrangements or of sporadic and seasonal activities, mainly at the holiday season. But since a kind of impromptu clearance is often achieved on a personal basis in small communities, co-ordination of programs is less urgently needed than community planning.

#### THE CHARITY ORGANIZATION SOCIETY MOVEMENT

History records that efforts to co-ordinate social welfare activities began at an early date, usually under religious auspices. In the modern period the significant beginning dates from the genesis of the Charity Organization Society movement in London in 1869. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 had created a situation from which some vigorous reaction was inevitable. The purpose of the "reformed" poor law was to deter the needy from asking for public relief. This purpose was achieved by incorporating into the act two major restrictive provisions. One of these per-

mitted the granting of relief to able-bodied persons only in "well-regulated workhouses." In other words, outdoor relief, or home relief, for the able-bodied was prohibited. The other restrictive provision required that the scale of relief be such that the condition of the recipient would be "less eligible" than that of the lowest-paid independent workman. This meant, in effect, that relief must be below a subsistence level.

The new act was successful in the sense that it did deter the needy from applying for public relief. It did not, of course, solve the community's problem of destitution. People would endure incredible hardships and would resort to almost any alternative before asking for public relief. As a result, conditions grew increasingly intolerable. Thousands of persons lived by begging. Children grew up in inconceivably destructive environments. Many of them were trained from infancy to be beggars or petty thieves. By 1869, some of the boards administering public poor relief in England were convened under police protection. Indiscriminate almsgiving was practiced on a wide scale. Many prosperous people were aware of conditions and had a desire to relieve them. Some did this by responding to the importunities of beggars. Others joined with friends and organized relief societies. Scores of these societies were in operation when the Charity Organization Society was founded in 1869.

As its name implies, the Charity Organization Society did not propose to become just another relief agency. Its purpose was to "organize" charity. Hence the principal objective was community organization. At its first meeting the new society went on record as favoring (1) an official register of all applicants for relief in the metropolis; (2) an act of Parliament to require registration of all charitable agencies and audits of their accounts. It is interesting to note that these ideas ultimately found expression in two instrumentalities that continue to be very useful today—the social service exchange and the charities indorsement program.

In structure the Charity Organization Society consisted of district committees and a central, community-wide council. The district committees aspired to arrange meetings at which all groups engaged in aiding the poor could meet and advise together. They hoped also to maintain a register of all relief granted in the district by any of the numerous local charities. At the outset the plan was to accept applications, to study them, and then to refer them to one of the established organizations in the district for such assistance as might be indicated. It was very soon evident, however, that many of the existing charities were very badly managed. Hence the Charity Organization Society decided to raise funds for relief in the hope of demonstrating to other agencies how such funds should be ad-

ministered. Ultimately, the administration of relief funds became in some communities a major function of the Charity Organization Society, often to the detriment of the original purpose—that of “organizing” the work of the existing charities. Nevertheless, the dominant objective for many years was to provide a channel through which the isolated efforts of numerous charities might be brought into some kind of intelligent, planned relationship with one another.

The Charity Organization Society movement was quickly transplanted to the United States where it spread rapidly, with the result that the leading nonsectarian family welfare agency in many American cities today is a lineal descendant of the original Charity Organization Society. It is not our purpose here to describe the somewhat stormy career of the organization in England, where its philosophy and its policies have been frequently and bitterly criticized by such doughty opponents as the Fabian group and the Labour party. Nor are we concerned to consider the important contributions this movement has made, particularly in this country where it has played a conspicuous role in developing the case work method. Our interest here is to note its accomplishments in furthering the process of community organization. Here the tangible achievements are not impressive. The pattern of social services is still a patchwork—considerably better co-ordinated, perhaps, than in an earlier day—but, nevertheless, still a patchwork. The number of separate administrative agencies is excessive, and the community continues to support many inferior programs that it has as yet found no way either to improve or to abolish. But the intangible accomplishments of the Charity Organization Society movement are noteworthy. The idea of “community” as opposed to “agency” has never been entirely lost to view since the Charity Organization Society first set out on the herculean task of “organizing” charity. From that day to this the objective, at least, has been clear; for the Charity Organization Society successfully implanted the conviction that there is a community problem to be met and that the hope of success lies, not in multiplying the number of agencies, but in achieving some kind of organization of group forces.

#### THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES MOVEMENT

In this country the Charity Organization Societies developed into functional agencies in the family welfare field, and many of them continued to exercise influence in community organization. Gradually it became clear, however, that a new approach was needed. This conviction found its expression in the council of social agencies movement, which

arose in the early years of this century and expanded rapidly, particularly in the early postwar period (i.e., after 1918). The new movement adopted many of the principles of the Charity Organization Society and profited greatly by its experiences. The Charity Organization Society had focused attention largely upon the need for co-ordinating effort in one field—the field of family welfare. The council of social agencies, however, hoped to achieve co-ordination in all fields—family welfare, child welfare, health, recreation, etc. It also articulated, much more clearly than the Charity Organization Society, the need for organized methods of social planning.

Like the earlier organization, the council of social agencies has failed to achieve all its goals. Its most conspicuous successes have perhaps been in effecting greatly improved co-ordination of existing programs. Lacking power to enforce its decisions, it has been able to move forward only as rapidly as its member-agencies and supporters would permit. The rate of advance has therefore been slow—much too slow to satisfy many of the agencies and individuals connected with the program. In social planning, particularly, there has been a conspicuous lag between the consummating of plans and the effective promotion of them in the community. Partly because of this, some observers have begun to predict that the council of social agencies movement is itself due to be supplanted by a new approach, just as it, in an earlier period, supplanted the Charity Organization Society. Differences of opinion naturally exist as to just what the new approach will be. Some of these views are presented in chapter xiii.\*

#### SPECIALIZED AGENCIES NEEDED FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Whatever the particular channel may be, it is clear that there can be no relaxing of the effort to improve the organization of community provisions. Agencies with special responsibilities in this field are essential, both for negative and for positive reasons. On the negative side it is essential that waste and duplication be prevented; on the positive side it is imperative that social treatment be co-ordinated and that definite provision be made for carrying on constructive social planning. Experience has demonstrated that some of these needs can best be met, not by functional agencies, but by organizations that are able to devote full time to the job. This is particularly true in urban communities. In rural counties it is not uncommon to find that some of these co-ordinating and planning functions are handled by agencies that also administer an important program of so-

\* See below, pp. 461-68.

cial treatment. But even in rural communities, organized local groups sometimes have been unwilling to accept the leadership of any one functional agency. In such instances it has sometimes been necessary to organize jointly controlled councils similar to those found in cities in order to enlist confidence and participation.

Duplication is wasteful in community organization, no less than in social treatment. Hence the functions of co-ordinating and planning agencies should not overlap. In the largest cities, where social planning sometimes is organized on a neighborhood basis, it may be necessary to develop special plans to co-ordinate the efforts of these separate planning groups. In the main, however, though co-ordination of independent activities is sometimes necessary, duplication has not been a serious problem. Most of these co-ordinating and planning agencies have clearly defined functions that differ from those of other organizations in the field.

From the point of view of persons unfamiliar with the present pattern of social work, much of the money expended by co-ordinating agencies may appear to be ill invested. Since these agencies do not render direct service to clients, it would seem that they are to some extent parasitical. It is absolutely clear, however, that, as long as social work continues to be administered by many separate organizations, co-ordinating agencies will be indispensable and a considerable expenditure will be required to maintain them. Planning agencies are likewise essential. Nothing could be more wasteful than to ignore the lessons of experience and to plod along without attempting to profit by them. Moreover, as has been suggested above, the evidence clearly shows that the outlook for an effective planning program is not good unless responsibility for it is definitely lodged in an agency that has time and resources to devote to the work.

It is important for social workers to understand clearly the structure and the functions of the co-ordinating and planning agencies. The programs of these agencies will change as time goes on, and social workers should share in reshaping them. Moreover, it is an ever present professional obligation to interpret the work of these organizations; for, even today, after our many years of experience, we still find many social agencies that refuse to make use of the social service exchange, that decline to participate in the activities of the council of social agencies, and that manifest, in general, an amazing resistance to community-mindedness. The various agencies that are primarily concerned with community organization may be defective in many respects, but it is a professional obligation to use them and to urge others to use them. They constitute our best present hope, and, if improvements are needed, they will be more likely to be

effected through the suggestions of participants than through the ill-informed criticisms offered by nonparticipants.

Agencies specifically engaged in community organization activities operate at the local, state, and national levels. In some cases the state or national agency may be mainly a clearing house for its member-agencies in local communities. In other instances the state or national agency is definitely seeking to mobilize social forces on a state-wide or nation-wide basis, either through local branches or independently of them. Local agencies are, almost without exception, concerned primarily with problems of co-ordination and planning in their own communities. Frequently they may participate in state-wide or nation-wide programs; but even then their major contribution is usually in influencing local opinion, and their objective frequently is to obtain action at a higher level that will have beneficial results in their own community.

Agencies engaged in community organization may also operate either at the treatment level or at the program level. If several agencies are working with the same family, there is an obvious need for clearance and understanding among them. Hence the community establishes devices to facilitate co-ordination of the services which these agencies are providing. The social service exchange, the joint intake bureau, and the case conference are all illustrative of services that aim to improve the organization of the community at the treatment level. At the program level, community organization is concerned to identify and to meet social needs for which no adequate provision has as yet been made. The research and the interpretive programs of councils of social agencies illustrate this approach. Some agencies engage exclusively in one or the other of these two types of community organization, while others, such as councils of social agencies and certain of the rural public welfare bureaus, have responsibilities both for co-ordination of treatment and for the development of improved social provisions. In most communities, both urban and rural, there is a clearly recognizable need for community organization activity at both levels.

#### CONTEMPORARY TRENDS

It is always difficult to assess the importance of contemporary trends. The major contributions of the Charity Organization Society movement and the council of social agencies movement can be identified because they can now be viewed in some perspective. Developments of the more recent past, however, cannot yet be appraised with equal clarity. Trends that seem freighted with significance today may perhaps, after a lapse of

years, prove to have had little lasting influence. Nevertheless, a few of these trends seem worth noting.

It has been pointed out above that the charity organization movement was concerned to co-ordinate activity in one area—the broad field of family welfare—and that councils of social agencies sought to extend this principle into the other fields of social work. The council brought all fields into one organizational structure in its efforts to achieve co-ordination and joint planning. Perhaps this objective was too ambitious. Perhaps no one organization can provide a channel for all the co-ordinating and planning that needs to be done in the community; and perhaps no one organization can provide adequate outlets for all groups that have need to participate in these activities. At any rate, certain counterdevelopments have become apparent in recent years. Few, if any, of these developments have sought to supplant the central council of social agencies. Their purpose has usually been either (1) to intensify the planning activities in a specific field of work, (2) to localize planning within narrower geographic limits, or (3) to broaden the participation in planning activities.

The "co-ordinating councils" illustrate all of these trends. These councils were created in response to a demand for more intensive efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency. Seldom, if ever, did these groups consider that they infringed upon the responsibilities of the central council of social agencies. Most of them were glad to work closely with the central council. But it was clear that they felt a need for opportunities which the central council did not seem to provide. For one thing, they wanted to work intensively in specific neighborhoods. Moreover, they wanted the participation of neighborhood groups that had never identified in any way with the central council of social agencies. And, above all, they wanted to concentrate upon a specific problem. Although later some of the co-ordinating councils extended their concern to problems other than juvenile delinquency, their desire to enlist the participation of civic groups not identified with the central council of social agencies and their tendency to work in specific neighborhoods continue to be characteristic features of their program.

The co-ordinating councils are not the only groups, however, that have sought to implant the social-planning function in neighborhoods. In most of the large cities, localized planning councils have sprung up. Sometimes this movement is indigenous, and sometimes it is fostered by some group that is larger than the neighborhood and may even be city-wide. The central council of social agencies has in some cities tried to assist these self-constituted neighborhood councils and to correlate their activities. In other places the central council has taken the initiative in starting neigh-

neighborhood planning bodies and therefore has an organic relationship with them. Elsewhere the neighborhood councils operate independently and have little or no contact either with one another or with the central council of social agencies.

There is very little similarity in the programs of these neighborhood councils. Unlike the co-ordinating councils, most of them do not concentrate upon one specific problem. Unlike central councils of social agencies, few, if any, of them attempt to cover the entire range of social welfare. Most of them seem to interest themselves in several kinds of development, the nature of which is determined by the interests of neighborhood leaders. Very often these interests, though important, are restricted in scope. Frequently they relate to such matters as improved cleaning of alleys within the ward, reduction of the traffic hazards to which school children are exposed, school-lunch programs, new equipment for neighborhood playgrounds, enforcement of laws barring minors from saloons, etc. Very often the people in the neighborhoods have very strong feelings about these localized problems and can therefore be expected to work to correct them much more vigorously than any city-wide organization.

In general, these neighborhood councils are likely to have a broad base of support. Civic, fraternal, patriotic, religious, and cultural groups often predominate in neighborhood councils, whereas social agency representatives are almost always in the majority in central councils of social agencies. The spontaneous rise of neighborhood councils therefore raises the following questions: (1) Since interest in social planning is obviously on the increase, can central councils of social agencies as now constituted provide the leadership required to foster this interest and to correlate the resulting activities? (2) Can the planning of groups that have little or no direct connection with organized social work be related to one another and to a central community-wide planning body?

Many people hoped that the rapid expansion of the activities of the Office of Civilian Defense following the outbreak of World War II would provide an answer to these questions. The program of the Office of Civilian Defense placed major emphasis upon local planning to meet social welfare needs. Throughout the country, communities were prompt to respond. In some places the new and enlarged social-planning program required by the national emergency was intrusted to the local council of social agencies, which thus became, in effect, the social welfare planning unit of the Office of Civilian Defense. In other localities the social-planning function was intrusted to a new committee, which was usually more broadly representative of various interest groups than the local council of



social agencies. The council was in some places an integral part of this community-wide committee, and in other places it had a recognized advisory relationship to the committee. In some places, however, the work accomplished by the Office of Civilian Defense committee was without benefit of the help it might have received from the council of social agencies.

The Office of Civilian Defense program in some cities succeeded in carrying the social-planning function down to the neighborhood level. In other communities neighborhood participation was sought but not effectively achieved. In most places, however, there was, in one way or another, a notable increase in the number of groups that shared responsibility for social welfare planning. Perhaps the total experience has proved that social planning has hitherto been confined to an unnecessarily restricted base. Many additional groups are evidently willing to participate in this phase of community life if the challenge is adequately presented and the channels for participation are clearly defined.

But social welfare planning, regardless of whether it rests on a broad or a narrow base, is, after all, only one kind of community planning. Other fields of planning are equally important. Moreover, the planning in some of these other fields determines the conditions with which social welfare planning must reckon. As yet no formula has been devised that will focus responsibility for planning of services of a distinctly welfare type and that will also, at the same time, relate these activities to other phases of community planning. It is clear that responsibility for planning in the relief field is an obligation of social agencies. Industrial planning, on the other hand, is not primarily a responsibility of social agencies, though the accomplishments in industrial planning directly affect welfare programs. Housing and many other fields occupy a middle ground. Social agencies do have knowledge that enables them to participate effectively in planning housing programs. But presumably an equal responsibility rests upon architects, builders, realtors, sanitary engineers, and others. To include all these groups within a single planning unit would obviously be very difficult. To relate all of them to one another effectively has also proved to be a baffling problem. Yet the trend apparently is in the direction of broadening the base of social welfare planning and attempting, at the same time, to relate it to other types of community planning. The Office of Civilian Defense undoubtedly emphasized in the public mind the need for encouraging both of these trends, but it is apparent that no well-defined pattern has thus far emerged that promises to be gradually adopted

throughout the country, as the council of social agencies movement was adopted two decades earlier.

At present, the organizations through which community organization for social welfare proceeds can apparently be classified on the basis of at least three kinds of criteria. In the first place, they may be classified in terms of their central activity as follows:

1. Agencies primarily concerned with co-ordinating, planning, and promotion in the entire field of social work. The central council of social agencies is an organization of this type.

2. Agencies primarily concerned with co-ordinating, planning, and promotion in one specific field of social work. Illustrations of this type of organization are provided in some communities by a city-wide federation of settlements, a mental hygiene society (i.e., a society that seeks chiefly to improve community resources in this field), an association for prevention of blindness, abolition of child labor, etc.

3. Agencies in which community organization is an allied or a secondary activity because a specific program of service to clients is the agency's first concern. Almost any high-grade agency in family welfare, child welfare, health, or recreation would provide an illustration of this combination of functions. In some of these agencies the community organization process focuses upon co-ordination of existing treatment resources; in others the chief interest is in developing new resources.

Organizations engaged in community organization may, in the second place, be classified on the basis of their geographical coverage, as follows:

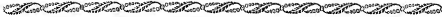
1. Those that follow the boundaries of traditional political subdivisions, such as the municipality or the county. Although there are exceptions, most central councils of social agencies fall into this group.

2. Those that ignore traditional boundaries in favor either of "natural" areas of interest or of economic or social considerations. Neighborhood councils are usually based upon the social cohesion that is assumed to exist in certain small geographic areas. Economic and social considerations have in recent years led to the development of planning on a broader basis than is provided by traditional political subdivisions, as, for example, in the Tennessee Valley or in the metropolitan areas surrounding large cities such as Boston or Chicago.

And, finally, the organizations engaged in community organization for social welfare may be classified in terms of their base of participation, as follows:

1. Those in which social agencies and social workers predominate. Most councils of social agencies in large cities fall into this group.
2. Those in which civic groups, such as service clubs, women's clubs, fraternal societies, etc., play a leading role. In small cities the council of social agencies is sometimes an organization of this type.
3. Those in which members are selected because of their personal qualities rather than because they represent an organized group. Social-planning councils in rural counties are likely to fall into this category.

The ensuing chapters are devoted to a discussion of the principal agencies that are engaged primarily in furthering the community organization process. An effort has been made, not only to describe the functions of these agencies, which are fairly similar throughout the country, but also to speculate, in some instances, as to the developments that may lie ahead. For the social worker needs not only to know the facilities that now exist but also to acquire the habit of thinking creatively about improvements that might be developed during the course of his professional career.



## CHAPTER XI

### CHARITIES INDORSEMENT



LEGITIMATE social agencies have long suffered from the operations of unscrupulous individuals who prey upon the public in the name of charity. The machinations of these persons assume sundry guises, but there is one common element in the depredations of all of them: They use the plea of charity to raise funds solely for their own use or for other questionable purposes. Sometimes they collect money in the name of agencies or institutions that do not exist. Or they may possibly represent organizations that do have some kind of flimsy and misleading structure. In some instances the agency may hand out a few meager doles to protect itself, but the work accomplished may be intermittent and fragmentary. Cases have been found, for example, in which perhaps 10 per cent of the "take" was spent for the benefit of clients and the remainder, in one form or another, found its way into the pockets of the promoters. Such agencies usually have some kind of "program" they can show when pressed; the real situation is revealed only by a careful audit of their accounts.

The task of curbing fraudulent charities is very much more difficult than might at first appear. An agency may actually spend a considerable proportion of its revenue on a program for clients. But the program may be of very low standard or may even be actually destructive in its effects upon clients. Assuming that those operating the organization are persons of honesty and good will, must the community continue to "indorse" their work? Benevolent people do not wish to contribute to destructive causes or to support ineffective work. Yet "indorsement" of a low-grade agency is a kind of guaranty that the program merits support. Should the old principle of *caveat emptor* operate here? Is it the responsibility of the generous man to withhold his gift until he has made a thorough examination of the program? Or is it the obligation of the community to provide some kind of reliable advance check? Experience has provided an em-

phatic answer to this question. Most givers do not have time to investigate the appeals addressed to them; many would not know how to do so. Unless some kind of protection is available, most of them will give on the basis of the quality of the appeal made; and, as is well known, the quality of an appeal may bear little relationship to the quality of the program. In the case of low-standard programs operated by honest persons, the issue boils down to this: Where shall the line be drawn between meritorious work and inferior work, and who shall decide whether a given agency falls above or below that line? In other words, it is very much simpler to expose an overt, malicious fraud than to decide whether indorsement of honestly administered programs that are of questionable value to the community is equivalent to a fraud against the public.

It has long been clear that this problem is too serious to be ignored. Donors are entitled to protection. They are relatively helpless amid the multitudinous appeals for contributions unless some trustworthy guidance is available to which they may resort. Agencies are also entitled to protection. The exposure of a single fraudulent appeal may have very detrimental effects upon the appeals made by the legitimate agencies. Many people will remember the one case exposed and, knowing little about the field of social work as a whole, will wonder how many other similar cases have managed to escape detection. Agencies with well-established lists of supporters may suffer little or no financial loss from the publicity given to these "exposures," but the less-well-known agencies do suffer, and, more important still, social work objectives suffer; for social work is concerned to engage in educational activities in the community. This purpose is handicapped by any mistrust that may develop toward any segment of the field.

The client group suffers indirectly as a result of charity frauds. Whatever is given to dishonest organizations is no longer available for the support of constructive programs. Whatever undermines confidence in the field of social work delays the educational activities that are directed toward the improvement of the community's provisions for disadvantaged groups. Whatever goes to low-grade agencies may subject clients to the continued ministrations of humiliating or destructive programs. From every point of view—except, perhaps, that of the offenders—the perpetration of frauds upon the public in the name of charity is an evil to be stamped out. Those who engage in such practices should be apprehended and brought to justice. But the apprehension and punishment of offenders, desirable as it may be, is by no means enough. In addition, there is need

for specific community machinery that will serve as an advance check. The principal objective should be to prevent such cases from arising.

Early efforts to control the problem of charitable racketeering were initiated by private social agencies. The Charity Organization Society was particularly active in this field. In many cities this agency or some other private society investigated appeals and either issued lists of approved organizations or stood ready to supply information upon request. The Community Service Society of New York City, for example, operated its Contributors Information Bureau until 1940. Some social workers believe that the indorsement function should have remained in the hands of social agencies. A majority of those who have studied the question, however (including both social workers and laymen), believe that the transfer of the indorsement function from social agencies to other types of community agencies was a desirable development. Indorsement is important because, among other reasons, it assists agencies in obtaining support from donors. Since a majority of donors have a background of business or civic interests, indorsement by an agency not directly connected with the administration of social work is believed to carry greater weight with them. Thus indorsement by a committee of the local chamber of commerce is doubtless more effective with most donors than the earlier indorsements of social agencies. The evidence suggests that in a great many places the investigation that preceded indorsement was more thorough when it was intrusted to social agencies, since their background of experience made them familiar with the aspects of the problem that might easily elude other groups. Nevertheless, the advantages of indorsement by a presumably disinterested organization were considered persuasive, and the development has therefore been in the direction of intrusting the task either to civic organizations or to social work agencies that are not dependent upon contributions for support, such, for example, as local departments of public welfare.

Among the nonofficial agencies charged with the indorsement function, the chamber of commerce is perhaps the organization that has had the widest experience with the problem. The movement to impose this work upon associations or chambers of commerce began at least as far back as 1907. Many of them still carry the responsibility. In fact, although definite figures are wanting, the evidence suggests that the chamber of commerce is still used in this capacity more frequently than any other one type of organization.

Partly as a result of their experiences in indorsing charitable campaigns, chambers of commerce have been very active in sponsoring the organization of community chests. The community chests have, in turn, material-

ly diminished the problem of charitable racketeering. Many donors have come to look upon the local chest as a symbol of responsible administration of local private social work. Hence, they elect to channel their giving through the local chest. As a result, the field in which the fraudulent solicitor can operate successfully has been sharply curtailed. In some communities, where the indorsement of charitable campaigns was once a large and vexing problem for the chamber of commerce, it has now become largely an incidental function.

#### INDORSEMENT STANDARDS

The experience of local indorsing groups, which in some communities now covers a period of three decades or more, has gradually led to the development of criteria that serve as guides in acting upon applications for indorsement. Naturally, these criteria are not uniform throughout the country. Nevertheless, an examination of the standards used shows a considerable degree of uniformity among them. There are eight points that seem to occur, in one form or another, in most of the lists of requirements currently in use.

One basic requirement is that the agency applying for indorsement be legally incorporated. In most states the statutes lay down very simple provisions that enable interested groups to form a "corporation not for profit." In fact, the granting of a certificate of incorporation is often practically automatic in case a few simple procedures are observed. A few states have interposed somewhat more meaningful provisions, requiring, for example, that the certificate of incorporation be granted by the secretary of state or other responsible official only after investigation and report by the state department of social welfare. The granting of a certificate of incorporation on what practically amounts to an automatic basis carries with it, of course, no assurance that the agency will meet an actual need or that its sponsors are reliable. Even this automatic procedure is a safeguard, however, since it gives the organization a legal personality, enabling it to sue and be sued, to be held responsible for fulfillment of contracts, etc. For this reason very few accrediting committees will indorse an agency unless it has been legally incorporated.

A second common requirement is that reports be published. In some places, however, this requirement is honored in the breach rather than in the observance. Some indorsing groups that list this provision have been known to indorse agencies that have not issued reports for many years. It is unfortunate that any agency should be thus encouraged to ignore an important responsibility. Groups that collect money for charitable pur-

poses are serving in the capacity of trustees. They should be scrupulous in giving a public accounting of their trusteeship. The plea of economy is often advanced as an excuse for failing to report. This plea has now lost much of its force, however, since inexpensive methods of duplicating documents have been perfected. Public opinion would undoubtedly sustain indorsing groups that withheld approval of agencies that persistently fail to give some kind of accounting of their work.

A third provision required by practically all indorsing groups is that the accounts of the agency be audited at least once each year by a certified public accountant. This is a reasonable requirement, and few, if any, agencies object to it. It should be pointed out, however, that an official audit is not necessarily a guaranty that resources have been wisely expended. Auditors check the accounts to make sure that vouchers, receipts, and similar instruments are on file in support of moneys spent. A voucher, however, though it may prove that funds were actually disbursed as indicated, is no proof that the expenditure was wise. An agency may be guilty of gross extravagance, or it may make purchases so completely out of line with basic needs as to be equivalent to misuse of funds. Such deviations from sound administration would not necessarily be revealed by an audit. Hence in a well-administered agency a committee of the governing body should periodically examine a sampling of the vouchers to make certain that funds are being handled with proper discretion. The public expects any governing body to hold itself responsible for the proper use of funds. In fact, the quality of the personnel of a properly constituted governing board affords a kind of assurance to contributors that their gifts will be wisely used. Hence it would be desirable if the requirement for indorsement were expanded to include provision for some kind of periodic check on expenditures by members of the governing body. Many agencies observe this practice voluntarily, but up to the present it has not been generally adopted as a requirement for indorsement. Many indorsing groups have thought such a provision would constitute an unwarranted infringement upon the prerogatives of the governing group and have therefore been content merely to ask for copies of the auditor's statement.

Most indorsing groups require, as a fourth provision, that the governing body of an agency meet at least quarterly. This, again, is a reflection of the feeling that the oversight exercised by members of governing bodies is one of the best means of reassuring the contributing public with respect to the soundness of an agency's operations. In some states the sections of the statutes relating to "corporations not for profit" include provisions for periodic meetings of the governing group. Although there is usually no



arrangement for checking up to see that this requirement is observed, the very fact that it is set forth in an act of the state legislature is helpful to indorsing groups in insisting that it be met. Most agencies, of course, meet much more frequently than four times each year. Few, if any, would fail to qualify for indorsement because the governing body met too infrequently.

A fifth requirement is that the agency raise its funds in an approved manner. A number of methods of money-raising once widely used are now quite generally frowned upon. Among these is the "remit or return" appeal. This system involves the mailing of some object, such as a box of pencils or a whisk broom, to an extensive list of persons with a letter requesting that the recipient either send in his check to pay for the merchandise or that he return the merchandise. This is an unfair approach. The recipient does not wish to retain merchandise he does not pay for; yet there is some annoyance and even some expense involved in wrapping and mailing the goods back to the agency. For these reasons, indorsing agencies do not like to approve agencies that make use of this method of solicitation. A few well-known exceptions occur. Certain agencies engaged in combating tuberculosis, for example, send Christmas stamps to prospective donors with a request for a contribution. These agencies are nevertheless indorsed, partly because this particular drive appears to meet with widespread public approval. Most people want seals bearing Christmas designs. Hence the inclosure meets a specific seasonal demand. Moreover, the Christmas seals cannot be regarded as merchandise in the same sense as pencils, whisk brooms, and other similar objects. The addressee therefore feels more free to exercise his judgment about accepting them. Furthermore, the Christmas seal sale is a very well-known and long-established venture. New undertakings of similar character might possibly experience difficulty in obtaining the approval of indorsing groups.

A considerable number of agencies still raise part of their budgets through giving entertainments, such as balls, concerts, athletic events, or teas. Indorsing agencies usually do not disapprove of this method of fund-raising, providing the "overhead" costs are kept within reasonable limits. In the past, communities have sometimes encountered unfortunate experiences in connection with such ventures. A charity ball, for example, may be planned on a very elaborate scale, with orchestras, flowers, and refreshments. Hundreds of dollars worth of tickets may be sold, but after the bills are paid, perhaps only a few dollars remain to turn over to the charity. Bad planning may be responsible for this outcome, but the impression on the public is invariably unfortunate. In effect, the appeal of

the agency's program has been exploited to no purpose. Sometimes, in fact, expenses exceed receipts, and a deficit remains to be liquidated either by the agency or by the sponsors of the entertainment. Even though a substantial profit is available to turn over to the agency, there is a sound basis for questioning whether it is good policy to raise money for charity in this way. Many people who might otherwise be persuaded to contribute substantial amounts to the organization may feel that they have discharged their obligation by buying a few tickets for the entertainment. Moreover, most of the tickets disposed of are sold because the entertainment is attractive rather than because the agency's program appears to be worth supporting. Thus the fund-raising operation, which, ideally, should always result in enlarged understanding of the agency's program and purposes, fails to attain one of its most important objectives. Indorsing agencies, in general, however, are not concerned to pass judgment on the agency's wisdom in raising funds in this way. They ordinarily ask for a statement of income and expenditures and try to determine whether costs have been disproportionately large. If a substantial profit has been earned, no question about the method is raised. If costs have absorbed most of the income, the indorsing group usually warns the agency to avoid similar occurrences in the future but does not ordinarily withhold indorsement because of one unfavorable experience.

Considerable difficulty has also been experienced with agencies that employ collectors on a commission basis to raise funds for them. Instances have come to light in which these collectors were paid as much as fifty cents or more on every dollar they obtained from donors. Even when the commission paid is small, the method is considered objectionable, for the donor knows nothing about the commission and assumes that his entire gift will be of direct benefit to the needy. Hence the situation is very different from the arrangement in well-organized campaigns. In the latter case paid help is retained to direct and organize the campaign, but provision for this service is included in the campaign budget and the contributing public recognizes it as a necessary expense. Hence there can be no charge of concealment. Where collectors are used, agencies are sometimes guilty of making arrangements that obscure the percentage of the donations that accrue to them. For example, one state-wide agency employed two collectors and agreed to pay them, in addition to their traveling expenses, the first \$125 they collected each month. These salaries were carried as a part of the agency's administrative budget. Actually, in some months the salaries constituted half of all the money obtained as a result of the solicitations made by the two employees. In general, indorsing

agencies are reluctant to approve agencies that employ collectors, regardless of whether they are paid on a salary basis or on a commission basis. In the end the two arrangements are not materially different from each other, and either appears to lead sooner or later to criticisms or even scandals. The preferred arrangement is to employ personnel to operate the campaign office and to use volunteers in the actual person-to-person solicitation.

New organizations are commonly scrutinized with special care by indorsing agencies. A sixth test commonly applied to them is this: Is the new agency proposing to inaugurate a service that is already being provided by some existing agency or that could be satisfactorily handled by expanding the work of one of the established groups? Often this is a difficult question to decide. In the states that withhold a certificate of incorporation from a new organization until the state department of welfare has made an investigation, the indorsing group may get some help in reaching a decision from the state department. In other places arrangements are sometimes worked out to obtain advice from other informed sources, such as the council of social agencies. The evidence suggests, however, that indorsing agencies do not find it easy to enforce a negative decision. Most cities can point to organizations formed within the past couple of decades that would undoubtedly have been denied indorsement if this rule could have been strictly enforced. Experience indicates that an applicant group genuinely intent upon moving forward can usually find a way to revise their plans to meet the objection that their work will duplicate an existing program. Or they may be able to enlist influential support in the community and thus put the indorsing group in the position of appearing to play an unjustifiably repressive role with respect to the exercise of philanthropic impulses. In such cases it may not be possible for the indorsing group to go much beyond conference and persuasion in seeking to prevent a wasteful or harmful duplication.

A seventh criterion which indorsing agencies generally seek to apply is the rule that applicant organizations must agree to co-operate with other agencies in the community in the interest of promoting efficiency and economy and of preventing duplication of effort. Most agencies will, of course, quickly promise to observe this rule. Some of them, however, have very little understanding of what it means to co-operate. They may even be ignorant of the programs and policies of other agencies. Sometimes they believe that, if they are meeting all the legitimate needs of the client group they have chosen to serve, they have no further obligations. One tangible evidence that an agency really means to play a part in the com-

munity-wide social welfare program is membership in the council of social agencies. This affiliation automatically brings an agency into a co-operative relationship with other organizations and provides a medium through which continued progress toward an integrated community program may presumably be expected. Indorsing agencies are not in a position, however, to demand council membership as a prerequisite for indorsement. The annual dues of the council may be high, and an agency with uncertain income may be unwilling to join for that reason. Then, too, some agencies are, for one reason or another, hostile toward the council. Moreover, councils usually have membership standards and sometimes refuse to accept certain agencies that might wish to affiliate. For these reasons, it is not feasible to adopt a specific rule that only member-agencies of the council will be indorsed. In actual practice, it is well-nigh impossible to apply a specific test, and the indorsing agency is therefore usually obliged to be content with the assurances given by the applicant agency that it will enter into co-operative relationship with other local agencies.

A final requirement for indorsement applicable usually only to agencies that dispense some form of relief is that cases be registered at the social service exchange. In cities where the exchange is supported by dues or fees paid by member-agencies, this provision imposes a considerable expense upon the organization. Perhaps this is the reason why some relief agencies have been known to receive indorsement even though they failed to comply with this standard. Actually, however, indorsement is very ineffective unless this provision is enforced. Donors would resent duplication of relief and service if they knew it existed, and they have a right to assume that an indorsed agency is protecting itself against such occurrences.

An examination of the foregoing requirements indicates that they are of two types. The first five relate to matters of administration concerning which a sound judgment might be formed by any indorsing organization. The remaining criteria, however, presuppose a knowledge of community needs and resources and a familiarity with social work methods. It is unlikely that a lay committee would be able to appraise these latter factors accurately without guidance from professional social workers. This is one reason why some social workers have thought that the entire responsibility for indorsement should rest with social work groups. Since it is apparent, however, that in many communities indorsement will continue to be intrusted to organizations outside the social work field, ways should be found to bring professional judgments to bear upon the procedure. In one city where the chamber of commerce indorses social agencies, a profession-

al social worker has been retained on a full-time basis to serve as secretary of the committee on charity indorsement. An arrangement of this type is obviously practical only in cities where the volume of applications for indorsement is large enough to require the attention of a full-time worker. In a number of places consultative relationships have been worked out. For example, in one city in which the chamber of commerce handles the indorsement work, the responsible committee refers all applications to the local council of social agencies with a request for advice. The council of social agencies reviews the application, forms a judgment on the social work aspects of the organization's work, and returns a report to the chamber of commerce. The chamber of commerce then examines the administrative and fiscal aspects of the applicant's operations and, on the basis of these two studies, reaches a decision as to the appropriate action to take.

#### METHODS OF INFORMING DONORS

There are two methods in common use for informing potential donors about the merits of agencies that seek contributions. In some places a list of indorsed agencies is published. This list may be widely disseminated throughout the community or it may be given only to individuals and corporations affiliated with the chamber of commerce or other agency that finances the work. Since business firms and other big givers would ordinarily be members of the chamber of commerce, a circulation thus restricted nevertheless succeeds in reaching a large proportion of the big givers. Some communities prefer not to publish an approved list. They advise potential donors to communicate with the indorsement bureau for information before responding to any appeal. The argument in favor of this system is that much more complete information can be given in this way. A published list of indorsed agencies includes some with excellent standards and others that were barely able to qualify. The best and the poorest agencies thus obtain equal footing, and donors who are unfamiliar with the field have no basis for distinguishing among them. This difficulty is avoided if reports are given only on request. Each request can be answered fully, and the inquirer can be provided with a fund of information that should give him an adequate basis for deciding whether he wishes to respond to the appeal. On the other hand, many busy people will not use a service of this type. They will give on the basis of the appeal without troubling to ask for a report from the indorsement bureau. Because so many donors have been found to react in this way, some communities believe a list, in spite of its limitations, serves a more widely useful purpose than the inquiry system.

## LOCAL INDORSING AGENCIES

Although in many cities the chamber of commerce still carries the responsibility for the indorsement of charities, a number of communities have worked out other arrangements. In New York City the operation of this safeguard is intrusted to the Department of Welfare. In the period from January 1, 1938, to June 30, 1939, the department issued 392 licenses, denied 8, and initiated action against 54 fake charities. Unfortunately, there is one loophole which enables some unscrupulous groups to evade detection.<sup>1</sup> By incorporating under a religious title, a fake charity can conduct drives for funds in New York City without obtaining a license from the Department of Welfare. This is the kind of defect, however, that may presumably be corrected by legislative action.

In some cities the licensing of charitable drives is intrusted either to the police department or to an independent board. Cincinnati has a three-member board to pass upon requests for licenses. One of the three members is the head of the local welfare department. The other two are appointed by the city manager. St. Louis has a commission of nine persons that usually meets twice each month to pass on appeals. Two are members of the city administration and the remaining seven are appointed from certain representative groups, such as the chamber of commerce, the Better Business Bureau, organized labor, and veterans' organizations. An apparent defect in the St. Louis plan is that the granting of a license to solicit funds does not carry with it an indorsement of the agency. In Detroit, permits to solicit funds are issued by the mayor on the basis of recommendations made jointly by the police department and the chamber of commerce. In a number of other cities similar arrangements prevail. In recent years the trend appears to be in the direction of intrusting the indorsement or licensing function to official bodies rather than to unofficial organizations.

## LICENSING VERSUS INDORSEMENT

The implications of licensing and indorsement are, of course, by no means identical. Indorsement protects big givers, but it offers only indirect protection to the great mass of small contributors. A big giver usually knows about the indorsement bureau and consults it before responding to an appeal. The fraudulent charity is thus effectively barred from making inroads upon the sources to which the local charities must look for their principal support. The small giver, however, often does not have access to the reports of the indorsement bureau and may not even know

<sup>1</sup> See Doc. 11-C (pp. 368-70).

that they exist. Such protection as he gets comes from the fact that fake charities may avoid communities where they know they cannot easily tap the large sources of revenue. In short, indorsement bureaus are effective only to the extent that individual donors know about them and have sufficient confidence in them to follow their recommendations. Licensing, on the other hand, is an official matter. Individuals who solicit contributions without a license are subject to arrest by the police. The protection offered is thus community-wide. Moreover, those who know nothing about the licensing provision are protected as well as those who are familiar with its operations. In general, it seems fair to say, however, that investigations made by indorsing agencies, such as chambers of commerce, are more thorough than the procedures thus far worked out in most cities that use the licensing provision as a means of protecting donors. Licenses are likely to be granted to organizations that seem to meet satisfactory standards of integrity, and often very little effort is made to examine the program or to appraise the quality of work. The ordinances relating to licensing often exempt a few well-known charities, such as the Red Cross and the community chest. The phraseology of these ordinances often suggests that they are regarded as police measures, calculated to prevent patent fraud rather than welfare measures designed to promote higher standards of service. It is also true that official licensing agencies may easily be exposed to political pressures. If an important political figure intervenes to obtain a license for a charitable drive, the officials in charge of licensing may find it difficult or impossible to refuse him. Similar situations often arise, however, in voluntary indorsing agencies. If a prominent supporter of the chamber of commerce presses hard in support of a substandard charity, the indorsing group may be exceedingly reluctant to alienate him by declining to indorse the agency he favors.

If we judge the future by the past, it would seem that we cannot foresee a time when the community will not need some type of organization to protect itself against fraud in the field of charity. There is general agreement that the arrangements now prevailing have been helpful. There is also a conviction that in a great many places the existing arrangements can be improved. The evidence at hand suggests that licensing by an official body is potentially a sounder line of development than indorsement by nonofficial agencies. The former carries with it the possibility of legal enforcement, whereas the latter must rely upon voluntary co-operation. Nevertheless, a licensing procedure is not necessarily effective merely because it has legal sanction. Like most other public services, it must be safeguarded against political control if it is to serve its purpose in the com-

munity. Moreover, reasonable standards must be developed and enforced. To grant a license automatically to any organization that appears to be honest is a very primitive form of protection. There should be, in addition, some inquiry into the need for the organization's work and some examination of the quality of its program. In other fields, such as public health, licensing standards have been developed that take into account not only the protection of the community but also certain positive factors relating to the promotion of well-being within the group. The licensing of charitable drives should likewise be administered with a set of reasonably comprehensive standards as a guide.

If the development continues in the direction of licensing, there will doubtless be differences in the administrative provisions adopted in various places. In general it would seem to be preferable to impose the responsibility upon a welfare authority, as in New York City, rather than upon a police authority. In either case the ultimate appeal would be to the courts; and the welfare authority, unlike the police authority, has a background of specialized knowledge relating to the problem. To intrust the function solely to the police would be to deprive the community of the benefit of available knowledge that should influence the decision. In the health field, licensing is usually intrusted to officials who know the field of public health. In the welfare field responsibility should likewise be placed in the hands of those who are qualified to form professional judgments.

#### PRIVATE INDORSEMENT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Exposures of fraudulent charities in the past suggest that many of them are not local in origin. Sometimes the promoters purport to represent a worthy institution in a neighboring state. The claim is that the institution serves the entire region and therefore must draw support from all of the states it serves. Or the program may be depicted as national or international in scope. Often the credentials are imposing and may include a list of nationally known persons as sponsors. In some instances these individuals may even have consented to the use of their names. Cases have often been brought to light in which sponsors made inadequate investigations or were in some way tricked into lending their names to undertakings that fell far short of meeting acceptable standards of integrity. The discovery that communities are fraudulently exploited from time to time by non-local organizations indicated the need for protection that could not readily be provided by local indorsing groups. Since 1917 this service has been offered by a private organization with headquarters in New York City, known as the National Information Bureau.



The National Information Bureau is a membership organization. In the main the members are individuals or corporations that have need for the service offered. Persons who contribute widely to philanthropy, for example, obviously need guidance in discriminating among the many appeals they receive. Many banks and business corporations are in a similar position. Organizations, such as chambers of commerce, community chests, welfare departments, churches, etc., likewise desire to protect their members from exploitation by unscrupulous promoters who come into town to raise money, often armed with a touching appeal and an imposing list of sponsors. There are several classes of memberships, depending upon the amount of dues paid, the fees ranging from \$10 per year upward.

The program of the National Information Bureau has been described as follows: "A cooperative effort for the standardization of social, civic, and philanthropic agencies in the national, international, and interstate field, and for the protection of the contributing public. After thorough investigation reports on such agencies are furnished to members. Free advisory service to organizations is maintained, including constructive help toward achieving acceptable standards of administration and financial control."<sup>2</sup> Thus the program covers investigations of all classes of appeals that are not strictly local in character. If a solicitor or organizer appears in a community, some interested individual or group, such, for example, as the community chest or the chamber of commerce, can send an immediate inquiry to the National Information Bureau. If an unfavorable reply is received, the solicitor will soon find that access to important prospects has been pretty effectively closed to him. He may still be able to impose upon some people—particularly the smaller donors who are not members of the National Information Bureau and do not have access to its reports. These small gifts are usually not attractive to impostors, however, and most of them, therefore, do not tarry long in places where their status is known. In flagrant cases the situation may be reported to local authorities, and pressure may be brought to bear to rid the town of the malefactors.

In addition to supplying reports to members upon request, the National Information Bureau publishes an annual list of organizations that comply with minimum standards of responsibility. This list, which is called *Giver's Guide to National Philanthropies*, is given to members only.

The number of appeals each year for support of interstate, national, and international charities is astonishing. The National Information Bureau does not publish annual reports for general circulation but does supply information concerning the volume of its activity. In a depression

<sup>2</sup> *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, p. 688.

year, when only the most courageous would undertake to launch appeals for funds, the number of drives investigated by the National Information Bureau was in excess of one per working day. In time of war the number of campaigns for national and international charities rises sharply. In 1941, some six hundred appeals were investigated. Moreover the amounts asked by nonlocal charities expand enormously in time of war. In 1942, for example, the campaign goals for national and international work exceeded \$100,000,000—a sum larger than the amount raised by community chests for the support of local charities in 1941.

#### OFFICIAL LICENSING AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The National Information Bureau was organized to meet a need that became widely recognized during World War I. The second World War likewise ushered in a new development in this field that may have important implications for the future. Section 8 of the Neutrality Act<sup>3</sup> gave the President of the United States a broad grant of powers to regulate charities that sought to relieve suffering in war-torn countries. On the day this regulation was approved (November 4, 1939) the President issued a proclamation delegating to the Secretary of State the power thus conferred upon him. The Secretary of State thereupon published a set of rules and regulations<sup>4</sup> applicable to persons and organizations engaged in, or seeking to engage in, foreign relief work. Each such individual or organization was required to register with the Secretary of State and to supply certain basic information requested by him. No organization could solicit funds unless it had in its possession a notice from the Secretary of State that its registration had been accepted. Although the regulations stated that these acceptances were not to be used by agencies as implying official indorsement of their work, there is some evidence to indicate that this provision has been violated in some cases. The rules also stated that all registrants must maintain complete records of all transactions for inspection by the Secretary of State at his pleasure. Announcement was made that registrations would not be accepted unless the applicant had an active, responsible governing body serving without compensation and a competent, trustworthy treasurer to handle the funds. It was also pointed out that registrations would not be accepted if wasteful or unethical methods of soliciting contributions were used. Methods specifically mentioned as objectionable included the "remit or return" sale of merchandise, the employment of solicitors on a commission basis, and the giving of entertainments if the

<sup>3</sup> Pub. Res. No. 54 (76th Cong., 2d sess.), approved November 4, 1939, Sec. 8.

<sup>4</sup> See Doc. 11-A (pp. 348-51).

estimated cost of the entertainments exceeded 30 per cent of the gross proceeds. The Secretary of State also reserved the right to revoke any registration upon receipt of evidence that the regulations were not being observed.

Although the Neutrality Act was extensively amended by the joint resolution adopted November 17, 1941, the provision relating to regulation of foreign war charities was not changed. From the outbreak of the war in 1939 to October 4, 1941, some seven hundred agencies entered the field of foreign war relief and raised a total of \$90,000,000.<sup>5</sup> These agencies varied greatly both in size and in scope of program. Some were organized to extend relief to sufferers in one particular village or city. Others hoped to assist the needy in one entire country or even in several countries. Moreover, these numerous societies varied in the kinds of relief they planned to extend and also in the area from which they hoped to draw support. Some were small groups who were all members of one club or one parish. Others organized committees or branches throughout the country in an effort to obtain contributions on a nation-wide basis. The office of the Secretary of State sought, through conferences, to effect combinations by persuading groups with like interests to pool their efforts. By February, 1942, the number of active groups had been reduced by this means to around three hundred.

In spite of these efforts, however, the situation continued to be baffling and confusing. The problem was not mainly one of suppressing fraud. Most, if not all, of the agencies were honestly striving to relieve misfortune. The great problem was one of duplication of effort. In an effort to work out some suitable method of remedying this situation, the President appointed a special three-man committee on March 3, 1941, to study the matter and to make recommendations. The chairman of this committee, which was known as the President's Committee on War Relief Agencies, was Hon. Joseph E. Davies, former ambassador to Russia. After examining the facts, this committee submitted an interim report on October 4, 1941, which follows this chapter as Document 11-B. This report contained very few specific proposals. It did recommend the re-registering of all active foreign-relief agencies with a view to granting new licenses "only when it appears to be in the public interest, and upon submission of satisfactory proof by the applicants that they are in a position to transmit the relief for which it is proposed to solicit funds, efficiently and economically, and without duplication of the work now done by existing agencies, such

<sup>5</sup> This sum is exclusive of the \$50,000,000 appropriated by Congress for refugee relief abroad but does include the contributions to the American Red Cross.

as the Red Cross. . . .” The report also specifically spoke against adoption in this country of the stricter type of regulation provided in Canada under the terms of the Federal (Canadian) War Charities Act of 1939.

Subsequent experience evidently altered the committee's views on the need for stricter regulation. Undoubtedly, this was partly owing to the fact that the duplication among foreign war-relief charities had, after the entry of the United States into the war, been further complicated by the mushroom growth of new national agencies designed to deal with war-created domestic needs. At any rate, announcement was made in July, 1942, that the President, by Executive Order, had “continued the President's Committee on War Relief Agencies and established it as the President's War Relief Control Board.” The official announcement of the creation of the new board stated that it had been brought into being “for the purpose of controlling in the public interest charities for foreign and domestic relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and welfare arising from war-created needs.” The powers of the board were described as follows: “(1) It will regulate and coordinate the times and amounts of fund-raising appeals. (2) It may eliminate or merge certain war relief agencies in the interests of efficiency and economy. (3) It will provide for the registration or licensing of persons or organizations engaged in war relief.”<sup>6</sup> The order specifically provided that the jurisdiction of the board should not extend to the American Red Cross or to certain religious bodies and local charities not connected with the war effort. Nevertheless, the order reflects a clear trend in the direction of stricter control and more extensive supervision on the part of the federal government.

As one means of carrying out its obligation to co-ordinate fund-raising appeals, the President's War Relief Control Board encouraged the organization of the National War Fund. In effect, the National War Fund is a nation-wide fund-raising organization modeled upon the lines of the familiar local community chests. It raises large sums throughout the country in one annual campaign for the support of the U.S.O., the United Seamen's Service, the War Prisoners' Aid, and about nineteen additional agencies that are aiding war victims in allied countries.<sup>7</sup> The inclusion of an agency in the National War Fund is, in effect, an indorsement of its program. Conversely, the foreign war-relief agencies not included are, of course, handicapped in seeking to raise funds independently, though they

<sup>6</sup> The practical effect of this order was to relieve the Secretary of State of responsibility for registering charities and to transfer his obligations in this area to the War Relief Control Board.

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed statement see Wayne McMillen, “The War Relief Agencies,” *Social Service Review*, XVII, No. 3 (September, 1943), 303-19.

are not necessarily forbidden to try. In general, the effort has been to persuade the independent war-relief agencies to merge with one of the member-agencies of the National War Fund, since in most cases their programs are closely akin to one or another of the programs already supported by the National War Fund.

It is too early to predict, of course, just what the outcome of these developments will be. There is ample evidence to indicate that there is need for some type of licensing of national charitable drives in time of peace as well as in time of war. The contribution made by a national indorsing agency such as the National Information Bureau is valuable and useful; but it can serve mainly by warning people against fraudulent groups and by providing detailed information about the operations of nonlocal philanthropies. There is need, in addition, for a body with power to enforce its decisions. This means, obviously, an official federal agency. Whether the present board will prove to be a suitable type of agency to discharge this function still remains to be seen. This board is composed entirely of laymen, and it is not organically related to any of the federal agencies that operate in the field of social welfare. Perhaps the licensing procedure would be more understandingly administered if it were intrusted to one of the social service departments of the federal government. Any federal agency selected for this purpose would undoubtedly be well advised to make use of the services of an advisory committee composed of persons who, like the members of the President's War Relief Control Board, have a distinguished record of activity in connection with philanthropic and other related public service activities. Important issues are at stake, and large sums of money are involved in many of our nation-wide charitable drives. Both lay and professional points of view should be represented in the agency responsible for approving or rejecting them.

Likewise, some observers believe that some type of national fund-raising organization similar to the National War Fund will continue after the war. The purpose of such an organization would be (1) to raise funds for some or all of the national private social agencies, (2) to subject their budgets to the scrutiny of an over-all budgeting committee, and (3) to help in the correlating of their programs. A move in this direction has already been made through the creation of an agency known as American War-Community Services, Inc. This agency has at present six member-organizations, all of which have national programs. Although war-created needs inspired the formation of the American War-Community Services, it is possible that the experience of joint fund-raising and joint planning of programs may demonstrate the need for some permanent form of joint

effort. If such a development should take place on a reasonably inclusive scale, the number of national appeals requiring investigation would undoubtedly be lessened. Just as community chests reduced the problem of charities indorsement locally, so a similar structure at the national level would probably produce comparable results in nation-wide philanthropic fund-raising.

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## DOCUMENT 11-A

### RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SOLICITATION AND COLLECTION OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR USE ABROAD<sup>\*</sup>

Section 8 of the joint resolution of Congress approved November 4, 1939 (Pub. Res. No. 54 [76th Cong., 2d sess.]), provides as follows:

"SEC. 8. (a) Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of section 1(a), it shall thereafter be unlawful for any person within the United States to solicit or receive any contribution for or on behalf of the government of any state named in such proclamation or for or on behalf of any agent or instrumentality of any such state.

"(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the solicitation or collection of funds and contributions to be used for medical aid and assistance, or for food and clothing to relieve human suffering, when such solicitation or collection of funds and contributions is made on behalf of and for use by any person or organization which is not acting for or on behalf of any such government, but all such solicitations and collections of funds and contributions shall be in accordance with and subject to such rules and regulations as may be prescribed.

"(c) Whenever any proclamation issued under the authority of section 1(a) shall have been revoked with respect to any state, the provisions of this section shall thereupon cease to apply with respect to such state, except as to offenses committed prior to such revocation."

Section 15 of the said joint resolution provides as follows:

"SEC. 15. In every case of the violation of any of the provisions of this joint resolution or of any rule or regulation issued pursuant thereto where a specific penalty is not herein provided, such violator or violators, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than \$10,000, or imprisoned not more than two years, or both."

On November 4, 1939, the President issued a proclamation in respect to France, Germany, Poland, and the United Kingdom—India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa—under the authority of Section 1 of the said joint resolution, thereby making effective

<sup>\*</sup> Department of State, November 6, 1939, No. 576.

in respect to those countries the provisions of Section 8 of the said joint resolution quoted above.

Section 13 of the said joint resolution provides as follows:

"SEC. 13. The President may, from time to time, promulgate such rules and regulations, not inconsistent with law, as may be necessary and proper to carry out any of the provisions of this joint resolution; and he may exercise any power or authority conferred on him by this joint resolution through such officer or officers, or agency or agencies, as he shall direct."

The President's proclamation of November 4, 1939, referred to above, issued pursuant to the provisions of Section 1 of the above-mentioned joint resolution provides in part as follows:

"And I do hereby delegate to the Secretary of State the power to exercise any power or authority conferred on me by the said joint resolution, as made effective by this my proclamation issued thereunder, which is not specifically delegated by executive order to some other officer or agency of this Government, and the power to promulgate such rules and regulations not inconsistent with law as may be necessary and proper to carry out any of its provisions."

In pursuance of those provisions of the law and of the President's proclamation of November 4, 1939, referred to above, the Secretary of State promulgates the following regulations:

1. The term "person" as used herein and in the Act of November 4, 1939, includes a partnership, company, association, organization, or corporation as well as a natural person.

2. Any person within the United States, its territories, insular possessions (including the Philippine Islands), the Canal Zone, and the District of Columbia who desires to engage in the solicitation or collection of contributions to be used for medical aid and assistance in France, Germany, Poland, or the United Kingdom—India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa—or for food and clothing to relieve human suffering in any of those countries, and who is not acting for or on behalf of the governments of France, Germany, Poland, or the United Kingdom—India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa—or any agent or instrumentality of such countries, shall register with the Secretary of State. To this end, such person shall make application in duplicate to the Secretary of State upon the form provided therefor.

3. Organizations or associations having chapters or affiliates shall list



them in their application for registration and shall set forth therein the addresses of such chapters or affiliates. In case chapters or affiliates are formed after the registration of the parent-organization, the parent should immediately inform the Secretary of State in order that its registration may be amended to name the new chapters or affiliates.

4. No person shall solicit or collect contributions without having in his possession a notice from the Secretary of State of acceptance of registration which has not been revoked, provided, however, that nothing in this regulation shall be construed as requiring a duly authorized agent of a registrant to have in his possession a notice of acceptance of registration. Chapters or affiliates named in the parent-organization's registration may, of course, operate under this registration. Notices of acceptance of registration shall not be exhibited, used, or referred to in any manner which might be construed as implying official indorsement of the persons engaged in the solicitation or collection of contributions.

5. All persons registered with the Secretary of State must maintain for his inspection, or that of his duly authorized agent, complete records of all transactions in which the registrant engages.

6. Persons receiving notification of acceptance of registration shall submit to the Secretary of State not later than the tenth day of every month following the receipt of such notification sworn statements, in duplicate, on the form provided therefor, setting forth fully the information called for therein.

7. The Secretary of State reserves the right to reject applications or to revoke registrations for failure on the part of the registrant to comply with the Provisions or purposes of the law or of these regulations.

8. A registrant may act as an agent for the transmittal abroad of funds received by another registrant, but such funds shall not be accountable as contributions received by the transmitting registrant.

9. Any changes in the facts set forth in the registrant's application for registration, such as change of address, of officers, or of means of distribution abroad, should be reported promptly to the Secretary of State in the form of a supplemental application, in duplicate, properly sworn to.

10. In view of the purposes and special status of the American National Red Cross as set forth in the Act of Congress, approved January 5, 1905, entitled "An Act To Incorporate the American National Red Cross" (33 Stat. 599), and particularly in view of the fact that it is required by law to submit to the Secretary of War for audit "a full, complete, and itemized report of receipts and expenditures of whatever kind," so that the submission to the Secretary of State of reports of funds re-

ceived and expended would constitute an unnecessary duplication, the American National Red Cross is not required to conform to the provisions of these regulations.

11. No registration will be accepted until satisfactory evidence is presented to the Secretary of State that the applicant for registration has organized an active and responsible governing body which will serve without compensation and which will exercise a satisfactory administrative control and that the funds collected by the registrant will be handled by a competent and trustworthy treasurer.

12. No registration will be accepted if the means proposed to be used to solicit or collect contributions include the employment of solicitors on commission or any other commission method of raising money; the use of the "remit or return" method of raising money by the sale of merchandise or tickets; the giving of entertainments for money-raising purposes if the estimated costs of such entertainments, including compensation, exceed 30 per cent of the gross proceeds, or any other wasteful or unethical method of soliciting contributions.

13. No registration will be accepted until the Secretary of State has been informed in writing by a responsible officer of the applicant for registration that he has read these regulations.

14. The Secretary will exercise the right reserved under regulation 7 to revoke any registration upon receipt of evidence which leads him to believe that the registrant has failed to maintain such a governing body as that described under regulation 11, has failed to employ such a treasurer as that described under regulation 11, has employed any of the methods for soliciting contributions set forth under regulation 12, has employed unethical methods of publicity, or has failed to attain a reasonable degree of efficiency in the conduct of operations.

15. The sworn statement to be submitted by registrants in accordance with regulation 6 shall be supplemented by such further information as the Secretary of State may deem necessary.

16. Valid registrations under the rules and regulations governing the solicitation and collection of contributions for use in belligerent countries promulgated September 5, 9, and 11, and October 4, 1939, pursuant to Section 3 of the Neutrality Act of May 1, 1937, remain valid under these regulations.

DOCUMENT 11-B  
INTERIM REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S COM-  
MITTEE ON WAR RELIEF AGENCIES<sup>\*</sup>

I. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE

Since the outbreak of war in Europe in September, 1939, hundreds of new private foreign relief agencies have sprung up all over the country, the activities of existing foreign relief agencies have been greatly increased, and governmental assistance for foreign relief has been inaugurated on a large scale.

At the same time, domestic relief and welfare needs within the United States have continued and, as the defense program and our own military forces expand, these needs are rapidly increasing.

The difficulties inherent in this situation led the Secretary of State to address a letter to the President, on March 3, 1941, reviewing the developments up to that time and pointing out that, while all these relief efforts were inspired by the finest human instincts, there was growing danger that they might be frustrated if they continued to be conducted without regard to one another and without proper co-ordination. The Secretary suggested that the President consider the appointment of a committee to examine the entire problem and make recommendations as to what steps might be taken in connection therewith.

The President approved this suggestion and appointed, as of March 13, 1941, the Committee on War Relief Agencies, consisting of Mr. Joseph E. Davies, chairman, Mr. Charles P. Taft, and Mr. F. P. Keppel.

II. FUNCTIONS OF COMMITTEE

The functions of the committee, as outlined in the letter of March 3, 1941, from the Secretary of State to the President and approved by him, were to examine the entire problem of foreign war relief and its relation to local welfare and to national-defense relief and welfare needs and to report to the President with recommendations as to appropriate measures in connection therewith, in the public interest.

Specifically, the committee's principal functions would be:

1. In the foreign field to advise with, and co-ordinate the activities of, private (nonofficial) foreign war-relief agencies.

<sup>\*</sup> Submitted by the President's Committee on War Relief Agencies, October 4, 1941.

To ascertain the facts regarding fund-raising campaigns by such agencies in relation to the relief resources already at hand, to the needs which actually require relief, and to the shipping facilities available for the transportation of relief materials.

To determine the extent to which effective relief operations in countries of destination are restricted or prohibited by economic and military controls or by limitations on transportation and communication facilities.

To consider the activities of all private relief agencies in relation to the program of the American Red Cross, so as to prevent unnecessary duplication of its efforts.

2. In the domestic field to correlate the fund-raising of all relief organizations in order to insure the preservation of local and essential permanent welfare services, to maintain a proper balance between foreign and domestic relief programs, and to insure that foreign relief fund-raising campaigns do not unduly impair the sources of revenue required for relief at home.

### III. SOURCES OF FACTUAL DATA

Questionnaires were sent to some six hundred private foreign war-relief agencies, requesting detailed information regarding their activities. Full consideration was also given to the current data furnished to the Department of State by agencies registered with that department.

In addition, conferences were held with all United States government agencies concerned with relief and welfare activities, including the Department of State, the War and Navy Departments, the Federal Security Agency, the Red Cross, etc., as well as with diplomatic and consular representatives in the United States of foreign countries on whose behalf relief activities are being conducted.

Complete co-operation was extended by the outstanding information services and civil control boards, such as Mayor La Guardia's Department of Welfare in New York, the National Better Business Bureau, the National Information Bureau, and other organizations having information or experience regarding relief problems.

Conferences were held with the heads of the principal foreign and domestic emergency relief agencies, as well as with permanent charitable organizations, such as the community chests.

Illuminating and constructive information was obtained from the National Department of War Services in Canada, which is the ministry charged with the control of all war-relief and welfare activities in that country.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

## IV. FINDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

A. THE FIELDS OF ORGANIZED BENEVOLENCE  
AND THE SUPPORT GIVEN THEM

Contributions flow from the public to the following fields of nongovernmental relief and welfare activities.

1. Religious: including substantial relief and welfare work at home and abroad, frequently separately organized.

2. Educational: colleges, schools, libraries, museums, with relief activities minor and incidental.

3. Permanent or continuous local relief and welfare: now importantly co-operating through community chests, together with numerous local agencies of the communities not under the title of a community chest.

4. Permanently organized disaster relief: represented principally by the American Red Cross and its chapters.

5. Domestic emergency defense relief and welfare: United Service Organizations, Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy, Red Cross.

6. Foreign emergency war relief: hundreds of independent organizations and associations, American Red Cross.

7. Permanently organized foreign relief and welfare: mainly but not entirely through religious organizations and the American Red Cross.

The funds raised in support of such charities are estimated as follows:

Total nongovernmental benevolences of the American public, including gifts to individuals (relatives or otherwise), according to estimates of the National Resources Board, approximate \$2,000,000,000 annually.

Total contributions by the public for all nongovernmental charitable, religious, and educational purposes are estimated to range from \$500,000,000 to \$800,000,000 a year, varying somewhat with the degree of national prosperity. This estimate is based in part on income-tax deductions.

It may be estimated, from the incomplete data available, that about \$215,000,000 were contributed during the last fiscal year to nongovernmental relief and welfare organizations in the United States. Of that amount, about \$65,000,000, or 30 per cent, was for foreign emergency war relief and \$150,000,000 for domestic relief and welfare activities.

Emergency foreign war relief therefore constituted about 8 per cent of total private contributions for religion, education, and charities, possibly 3 per cent of total benevolences, including personal gifts, and approximately one-tenth of 1 per cent of the total of all individual incomes. The total contributions for all nongovernmental relief and welfare were approxi-

mately a little over three-tenths of 1 per cent of the total of all individual incomes.

#### B. DOMESTIC RELIEF AND WELFARE

##### 1. SOCIAL AND CONTINUOUS RELIEF AGENCIES

Social relief and welfare agencies are those conducting permanent and continuous activities mostly as local units, in operation of homes and refuges for the young, the aged, the incurable, and other relief projects, and in operation of morale-building and guidance activities, such as those of the Y.M.C.A. boys' clubs, and Travelers Aid Societies.

In over five hundred communities this class of agency has attained, on a purely voluntary and local basis, an effective co-operation in appraisal of needs, united annual appeals for funds, and allocation of the proceeds. Over \$80,000,000 is annually raised by these community chests.

Certain religious groups supporting relief and welfare activities have also attained a considerable co-ordination of effort in appeals to the public.

Most of these permanent agencies have their accounts audited by certified public accountants and publish their reports. Many are incorporated with the responsibilities attached thereto. Boards of directors apparently exercise responsible control of such agencies.

On the whole, the local relief and welfare agencies are well co-ordinated and present only minor problems as to duplication of appeals or of services among themselves, with, of course, some exceptions.

##### 2. PERMANENT DISASTER OR EMERGENCY RELIEF, NATIONAL

The outstanding permanently established emergency relief agency is the American Red Cross with its nearly four thousand chapters. Its support is largely derived from membership fees obtained by nation-wide annual drives conducted chiefly by the local chapters. It also receives contributions for special disaster relief as disasters occur.

Including funds retained by chapters for their operations, the American Red Cross in recent years has raised normally from \$10,000,000 to \$13,000,000 a year. In 1940, on short notice, it raised about \$21,000,000 for a special war-relief fund.

In 1940-41 the President of the United States constituted it the agency for transmission and distribution of relief materials provided for foreign war relief by an appropriation of \$50,000,000 by Congress.

The Red Cross maintains a considerable staff to plan for emergencies and be ready when needed for disaster-relief operations. Financial accounts of the American Red Cross are annually audited by the War De-

partment and reported to the Congress. Its affairs are closely supervised by a central committee of eighteen members, six of whom are appointed by the President of the United States.

As regards fund-raising, the President, in a letter of June 6, 1941, to the chairman of the Red Cross, indorsed the action of the central committee in maintaining freedom to conduct a Roll Call for its annual membership and freedom to launch a campaign for funds to meet needs in disaster or in time of national emergency. At the same time, the President agreed that a common-sense adjustment should be made in individual local instances, whenever the timing of events beyond control brings conflict in Red Cross campaigns with other campaigns.

The President also suggested that plans for a national emergency should include a proper spacing of the fund-raising campaigns for the Red Cross, the United Service Organizations, and the community chests. This committee offers the further suggestion that in the spacing of such fund-raising campaigns, consideration should also be given to the requirements of governmental financing, such as the sale of national defense savings bonds, etc., and to the requirements of nonofficial foreign war-relief agencies.

### 3. DOMESTIC EMERGENCY DEFENSE RELIEF AND WELFARE

Domestic emergency defense relief and welfare appear well co-ordinated, following government designation of the various forms of relief and welfare activities desired of privately supported and organized agencies.

The Army and Navy take full responsibility for the physical and morale needs of soldiers and sailors within the reservations.

The Red Cross is responsible for a home service program for the soldiers and sailors in relation to their families and for welfare and recreation programs in the hospital areas of the armed forces and as a reserve of medical and nursing services in emergencies.

The United Service Organizations, Inc. (the "U.S.O."), represents the co-operation of six nongovernmental national welfare agencies to operate recreational centers for soldiers and sailors when away from the reservations, in buildings to be provided, where local facilities are inadequate, by the United States government.

The Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy, under government sanction, will receive and co-ordinate offers from the public of entertainment, materials, and services for use within camps and reservations.

## C. FOREIGN WAR RELIEF

## I. THE SOURCES AND VOLUME OF FOREIGN WAR RELIEF

Some seven hundred agencies<sup>10</sup> have operated since the beginning of the present war in 1939 and have raised a total of \$90,000,000, of which \$65,000,000 have been contributed during the past year. This is exclusive of the \$50,000,000 appropriated by Congress for refugee relief abroad but does include the contributions to the American Red Cross.

The military and geopolitical changes of the last two years or more are reflected emotionally among the racial groups of interest in this country, and the volume of relief funds peaks and falls with the fortunes of war.

The groupings of dominant interest in order of total volume of relief contributions to date<sup>11</sup> are: British, Jewish, Greek, Polish, Finnish, Allied (British Empire, French, and Belgian largely), Chinese, other religious (operating internationally), and French—or nine groups, accounting for 90 per cent of the total relief volume.

Three of the 70 agencies comprising the British group account for one-third of the total relief volume of all groups since the beginning of the war in September, 1939. Moreover, less than 50 agencies account for 90 per cent of the total volume of relief receipts.

Of these 50 agencies, only 10, included within the British, Jewish, Greek, Finnish, Polish, and Chinese groups, account for nearly 80 per cent of the total cash receipts of all agencies. (All of these comparisons are exclusive of contributions to the American Red Cross.)

Several of the racial groups—the Greek and Norwegian, for example—hold substantial balances of funds because of the rapidity of the German occupation. A number of groups are inactive with no effective relief balances. (Many of these agencies would, no doubt, be stimulated to action by a favorable turn of events.)

About 30 per cent of the foreign war-relief contributions of the past year, or approximately \$20,000,000, have been made up of special contributions from the public to the Red Cross.

The relief supplies for refugees made available by the United States government to the American Red Cross, under the terms of the Emergency Relief Appropriation for the fiscal year 1941, are in addition to these funds. \$50,000,000 were appropriated, with unexpended balances subsequently made available for the fiscal year 1942. During the year

<sup>10</sup> The total number active at any one time is considerably smaller, the rate of turnover being high.

<sup>11</sup> This order does not necessarily reflect the current rate of collections.



supplies purchased under this appropriation have been sent for British, Finnish, Chinese, Greek, Spanish, and French relief.

The shipment of food or other basic commodities to Great Britain and elsewhere, under the terms of the Lend-Lease legislation of 1941, permits a more selective and effective use of the relief resources made available as such by Congress, the Red Cross, and the many nonofficial organizations.

## 2. CHARACTER OF RELIEF

Eighty per cent of the agencies reporting to the committee provide relief, in whole or in part, in the form of funds to be sent abroad for the purchase of supplies in the country of destination. This is to be expected because of the relative ease of delivery of funds, at least until recently, as compared with the restrictions upon shipping.

Relief in kind in the form of food, clothing, or medical supplies does not exceed 25 per cent of the total value of the relief volume of such agencies. A few agencies have undertaken to supply unusual commodities, such as instruments of precision, household-protection firearms, and ambulances, or to support the services of nurses, physicians, and other welfare workers.

Outside the field of collective war relief, packages of food are transmitted as gifts directly from individuals, largely through the American Red Cross and the International Red Cross, or through commercial forwarding agents.

## 3. COSTS OF RELIEF FUNDS

War-relief agencies are organized and operated under widely varying conditions of financial supervision and control.

The general average for administration and other costs of 331 agencies who have reported to the State Department is about 10 per cent of the total funds received. Individual agencies show cost ratios as low as 3 or 4 per cent and as high as 25 per cent or more in extreme cases. The low-cost agencies are mainly permanent social organizations in which war relief is an auxiliary function, or organizations whose war-relief activities have grown so that they are directed in the manner of business corporations. The higher-cost agencies are mainly emergency organizations without adequate and active boards of control, and those employing expensive and inefficient methods of raising funds, such as high-pressure mail campaigns.

In general, the highest expense ratio in any single group of agencies, as a group, is found among those soliciting relief for nonbelligerent countries. A number of these agencies, not registered with the State Department, show a cost ratio of 30 per cent or more. There are, however, outstanding exceptions.

It is significant that the State Department's excellent administration of the relief provisions of the Neutrality Act of 1939 has exercised a marked influence on the efficiency of the relief activities of registered agencies. These agencies are subject to the discipline of published periodic reports.

#### 4. MAJOR PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN WAR RELIEF

The major problems may be summarized as indicated in the Secretary of State's letter of March 3, 1941, to the President; from the information given in the report of the agencies to this committee; and as suggested by the committee's own appraisal of the situation.

a) *Co-ordination and correlation of relief activities.*—There is a measure of co-ordination among foreign war-relief agencies making up each of the dominant groups, as, for example, the Finnish, Norwegian, Czechoslovak, Greek, Jewish, and now the Chinese and French. There is still incomplete correlation, however, within these groups and an even greater lack of co-ordination outside of them.

The most difficult situation as regards internal conflict was, perhaps, in the British group. After several conferences with this committee the worst of this situation has been ironed out, although considerable duplication still remains.

The immediate problem is both to bring the relief groups of dominant interest into co-ordination with one another and to complete, as far as possible, the internal co-ordination within each group.

There is need for advisory functions in the co-ordination of foreign relief activities with the two major domestic relief and welfare groupings, particularly in the timing of national drives, which is of serious importance in the public interest.

The relief structure as a whole, as now composed, does not assure the maintenance of a balance in respect to relief resources and facilities available and needs and appeals of the groups interested in foreign war relief, relief for the defense forces, and community welfare.

b) *Relation of relief organizations to the American Red Cross.*—The American Red Cross, because of the field of its operations and its status as a quasi-official agency, operates largely as an entity.

Half of the foreign relief agencies reporting to the committee state that they have taken precautions to make inquiry through the Red Cross to ascertain the relation of their program to relief activities under way. Many of these use the facilities of the Red Cross for delivery of supplies. The remaining organizations made no report in this respect or stated that no inquiry had been made.

In view of the commanding position of the Red Cross in the foreign relief field due to its own resources and those made available by Congress, it is evident that there should be much greater integration of the programs of the numerous independent organizations with the program of this quasi-official relief agency, particularly as regards the provision of medical aid and assistance.

The establishment of such integration would help also to clarify the position of foreign war relief in respect to the program of the United Service Organizations in the field of relief for the defense forces, and in relation to the community chests in the local field.

c) *Relief intelligence.*—There is a lack of complete current information for the evaluation and correlation of foreign relief needs, priorities, resources, and facilities within each foreign country and as between the several foreign countries. Up-to-date information is essential because of military and economic controls and limitations upon transportation and communication facilities.

It would be useful, too, for the evaluation and correlation of the present programs of the private relief agencies with federal and Red Cross programs and would help direct the relief of the unofficial agencies more productively and less emotionally than now obtains.

In the absence of such information it is difficult effectively to mobilize relief resources in this country to preclude the solicitation of funds for kinds of relief which have not been requested or approved or for which shipping space is not available.

d) *Validation of agencies.*—The rules and regulations of the Department of State governing the agencies required to register have had a salutary effect in the protection of the interests of the United States and of the public. There is no provision, however, which will preclude registered organizations from carrying on unnecessary relief activities or activities which overlap the functions of existing agencies.

This causes confusion in the public mind. Some appeals are being publicized as "authorized by the State Department," referring to the act of registration. This registration, in the public eye, is the seal of official approval.

In view of the number of unregistered agencies, there is a need for the setting-up of standards and ethics relating to methods of solicitation; accounting for all receipts, transfers, and disbursements; responsible relationships between sponsors, directors, and management; and other factors relating to the provision of sound bases for the confidence of the contributing public.

e) *Registration of relief agencies.*—Under the terms of the Neutrality Act of 1939 only the war-relief agencies which solicit funds and contributions in kind on behalf of sufferers in countries proclaimed by the President as in a state of war must register with the federal government.

Technically, China is nonbelligerent, and the numerous agencies engaged in relief for this country are, in consequence, exempt from registration.<sup>22</sup> Finland, too, is in the same class. There are also countries where the facilities afforded or people affected are included within the active refugee interests of this country, including the financing of projects—Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal, for example, and the Latin-American republics and other states of asylum.

f) *Limitations on forms of relief.*—The language in Section 8(b) of the Neutrality Act of 1939 confines the character of relief to “funds and contributions to be used for medical aid and assistance and for food and clothing to relieve human suffering.”

Agencies soliciting books, seeds, or other articles or materials other than food, clothing, or medical supplies are, in practice, outside the jurisdiction of the Department of State and of its registration requirements. Such organizations can operate uncontrolled and without supervision. Moreover, an agency, even though registered with the department, may engage in solicitation of kinds of relief not included within present control, and the public may be quite unaware of the distinction.

g) *Transfer of funds and shipping facilities.*—The effectiveness of foreign war-relief efforts necessarily depends to a considerable degree upon the available facilities for the transfer of funds to countries of destination and upon shipping facilities available for the transmission of relief contributions in kind.

The expansion of military activities abroad has led to the freezing, by the United States government, of assets in the United States of all Continental European and some other countries, with provision for the issuance of general licenses in certain cases. The transfer of relief funds comes within the scope of this governmental control, and relief funds may only be transferred to any of the countries concerned by Treasury license.

The number of countries for which unrestricted transfer facilities are still available is continually diminishing, with the consequent growing restriction on the disposition of relief funds generally, except as funds collected for other countries may be diverted for relief purposes to the countries for which exchange facilities are available.

The situation as regards shipping space for materials required for relief

<sup>22</sup> At the present time (October 4, 1941).

purposes is by and large comparable to that described above in the case of transfer facilities for relief funds.

The arrangement made by the British Ministry of Shipping by which a definite amount of space is allocated for relief materials on each cargo liner proceeding to the United Kingdom is suggestive. Difficulties continue to arise, nevertheless. These difficulties in part concern the collection of materials of a particular kind in excess of the shipping space allocations for the particular classification.

Intelligent direction and guidance of foreign war-relief agencies on the problem of transfer of funds and shipping facilities can best be given by a continuing body, which can maintain current contact with the Treasury Department, the American shipping authorities, and the appropriate authorities of the various countries of destination. Information will then be available and suitable advice given as to the character of relief contributions which may be solicited with reasonable prospect of serving a useful purpose in the country of destination.

*h) Refugee relief.*—The relief of refugees presents a complex of political, social, and economic problems. Over one hundred agencies have reported that they are concerned with the problem of the refugee—a problem that cannot be disassociated from the problem of war relief as a whole.

The greater number of these agencies are engaged in the emergency relief of refugees through the provision of food, clothing, and medicine in countries of immediate asylum, and a few with the problems of evacuation, transportation, and rehabilitation in the countries of final settlement.

The committee is impressed with the effective action, despite the obstacles, which is now under way to correlate public and unofficial efforts in the treatment of the refugee problem from the standpoint of the long-range social objectives involved. In 1938, through the initiative of the President, the Intergovernmental Committee, composed of representatives of countries of refugee asylum and settlement, was established in London and has been assisted since that time by the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees and the Co-ordinating Foundation, a private body made up of British and American interests in refugees.

A number of the unofficial agencies engaged either in the foreign refugee-relief field or in the resettlement of refugees at home are now exploring through the Princeton Conferences the needs of refugees and the relation of these needs to the existing programs of the refugee-service agencies.

There is still substantial unco-ordinated effort in the field of immediate emergency relief for refugees, and some duplication in both solicitation and distribution exists in this, as in other, phases of foreign war relief.

There is the further problem of integrating both the immediate and the long-range efforts on behalf of refugees with other war-relief activities. The problem is never static and will be a postwar problem of particular seriousness.

#### D. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SEVERAL CLASSES OF RELIEF AGENCIES<sup>13</sup>

As already pointed out, there appears to be adequate co-ordination on a voluntary basis of fund-raising and operating functions among local permanent agencies and among the domestic emergency defense relief agencies by direction of the government, and there exists considerable desirable voluntary co-operation among certain foreign war-relief agencies that appeal for specific national relief, also well-developed co-ordination between agencies within certain religious and racial groups. A satisfactory co-ordination among the foreign war-emergency agencies as a whole is absent.

With the probability that the intensity and volume of appeals may be largely increased in the near future, the need is apparent for a means of successfully co-ordinating these appeals and determining their validities and practicabilities of accomplishment in the public interest, without diminishing the generous enthusiasms which have so far sustained these agencies with both funds and personal time and effort.

#### V. CONTROL OF WAR RELIEF IN CANADA

All war-relief and welfare activities in Canada, local and national, domestic and foreign, are controlled by the Federal War Charities Act of 1939. The act is administered by the Department of National War Services, assisted by a National War Charities Fund Advisory Board, composed of one civilian member from each of Canada's nine provinces and members of representative national organizations.

The Red Cross, which exclusively handles relief shipments abroad, and all war-relief organizations without exception, must register and obtain authority to make appeals for funds and to operate as relief agencies.

The Ministry may, and in practice does, demand audited financial statements, including the budget of proposed operations during the next twelve months and any other pertinent information regarding the activities of all relief agencies before issuing permits for appeals.

National appeals may be undertaken only by official permission and are restricted to the month of March, the autumn being reserved for perma-

<sup>13</sup> Domestic and foreign.

nent local charities appeals and the intervening months for government financing, such as the sale of war bonds.

#### VI. SUMMARY OF INTERIM CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the domestic field the committee finds that relations between the agencies concerned with national-defense relief and welfare have been adequately co-ordinated through the action of the President, the Army and Navy Welfare Departments, the Federal Security Agency, the American Red Cross, and the agencies comprising the United Service Organizations. No public appeals for these purposes should be made except through the United Service Organizations campaign and through the Red Cross.

The American Red Cross holds a unique position, both under its charter from Congress and under international agreements, and has definite responsibilities in the rendering of services to the armed forces, in disaster relief, and in certain fields of foreign relief, notably in the provision of medical aid and assistance and hospital services. It must continue to serve, as heretofore, as a popularly supported, and at the same time semi-governmental, agency and to carry out the responsibilities with which it is officially charged.

In the judgment of the committee, the activities of the Red Cross should be extended to include all the functions contemplated under its charter and international agreements, some of which functions are at present being carried out in the foreign field by other agencies.

The committee considers that it is of major importance to the public welfare that the fund-raising campaigns of all the major organizations should be co-ordinated so that there should be no conflict in timing the various drives. In this connection the committee has obtained the co-operation of the foreign war-relief agencies and other agencies in refraining from competing drives, as, for example, during the United Service Organizations campaign.

In the domestic field the activities of the local and essential welfare agencies are, for the most part, adequately correlated through the community chests and other similar local organizations. It is a matter of gratification to the committee that the community chests have voluntarily endeavored, and with considerable success, to move all of their fund-raising campaigns into the single month of October and to complete them in that month in order to avoid duplication with other relief and charitable campaigns, especially the Red Cross Roll Call.

In the foreign field, some seven hundred war-relief agencies with many thousand branches and associated committees and local groups have been

established in the United States since the beginning of the war. Together with existing permanent relief and charitable organizations, including the Red Cross, these agencies have raised a total of about \$90,000,000 for foreign relief, of which \$65,000,000 were raised in the last year.

Both among these agencies themselves and in relation to the American Red Cross there is need of co-operation and co-ordination to prevent conflicts in timing of solicitation, duplication of effort, and waste.

The committee has succeeded in bringing about in friendly conferences the elimination of many of these difficulties. Much inefficiency has also been eliminated as a result of the effective administration by the Department of State of Section 8(b) of the Neutrality Act of 1939 in connection with the operations of agencies registered with that department (i.e., agencies engaged in relief for belligerent countries).

The committee recommends that all licenses of agencies now required to register with the Department of State be revoked as of a future date to be specified; that new licenses should be issued only when it appears to be in the public interest and upon submission of satisfactory proof by the applicants that they are in a position to transmit the relief for which it is proposed to solicit funds, efficiently and economically and without duplication of the work now done by existing agencies, such as the Red Cross; and that there is reasonable prospect of their ability to apply the relief to the purposes intended in the country to which it is to be sent. In addition to continuing the requirement of monthly reports, re-registration should be required thereafter at regular intervals as may be determined.

Many problems still remain, particularly in the British relief field, which now accounts for some 60 per cent of the total foreign relief contributions. After several conferences with the committee, some of the major difficulties have been ironed out, but others persist.

For example, many independent British relief agencies are still actively soliciting contributions for medical aid and assistance for the United Kingdom, in spite of the ruling of the British Ministry of Health that all such relief should be channeled through the American and British Red Cross societies.

The committee feels very strongly that welfare activities for each major foreign country should be, at the very least, co-ordinated through some central advisory body to assure that the needs of that country are most efficiently being served.

Relief agencies for nonbelligerent countries (i.e., countries not formally proclaimed by the President as belligerents) do not come under the Neutrality Act, nor does the solicitation for belligerent countries of relief other



than medical aid and assistance and food and clothing to relieve human suffering.

Agencies soliciting for the benefit of China, Finland, Switzerland, the U.S.S.R., and other technically nonbelligerent countries (as of the date of this report) are therefore not subject to the central official supervision incident to registration requirements. The committee believes that this should be corrected, particularly as the overhead and solicitation costs of these agencies are, with certain outstanding exceptions, higher than in the case of agencies operating under the Neutrality Act. In the latter group, expenses average 10 per cent of total receipts or less, while among unregistered agencies the costs are frequently 30 per cent or more.

The committee recommends that, as a matter of voluntary co-operation in the public interest, all nonofficial war-relief agencies, such as are not required to register with the Department of State, furnish this committee with monthly information corresponding to that which is now being furnished the Department of State by agencies required to be registered with it.

There is relatively little fraud or graft in the charitable field. The great majority of these operations are being conducted honestly and in good faith. There are, however, some unsatisfactory situations. The committee, in co-operation with municipal and other organizations and with the F.B.I., has been measurably successful in the elimination of some of these. It should be understood that such cases are relatively very few. One of the abuses which should be corrected is the fact that in too many instances there are organizations including figurehead sponsors and boards who do not really work and assume the proper degree of executive responsibility and direction.

Generally speaking, the percentage of total benevolences in the United States for foreign relief is small, not exceeding 3 per cent of the total non-governmental contributions and representing between 20 and 30 per cent of strictly welfare and relief contributions (exclusive of educational and religious gifts). This does not seem to be an unreasonable proportion.

In Canada all war-relief agencies are under the control of a separate ministerial department and a National Advisory Board has been created by law. The Canadian Red Cross, the community chests, and all other charitable solicitations have been placed under the control or supervision of this authority. Definite times of the year are allocated to the different groups engaged in nation-wide solicitations. The committee is of the opinion, however, that, while this system works well in Canada, it would be inadvisable to attempt to project a similar system in the United States.

In connection with the broader aspects of relief the committee believes it would be desirable, in the public interest, to maintain a current relief intelligence service, for the purpose of carrying forward the factual data already obtained as to relief requirements, resources, and facilities. Not only would this current information assist greatly in the solution of existing problems, but it would also serve as the basis of intelligent planning for future war and postwar relief developments.

In conclusion, the committee finds that domestic agencies concerned with national-defense welfare and relief needs are well co-ordinated and that permanent local welfare organizations are conscious of their public responsibilities and are well integrated. In the foreign field measurable progress has been made in correlating activities to avoid duplication, but much remains to be done in this direction and in the direction of co-ordinating these foreign activities with the domestic welfare programs.

This committee, at the request of the President, will continue to function along the lines suggested in the letter to him from the Secretary of State of March 3, 1941. The committee, as requested by the President, will continue to serve also as an advisory agency and as a liaison between foreign relief agencies and the various governmental and domestic relief and welfare organizations.

JOSEPH E. DAVIES, *Chairman*

CHARLES P. TAFT

FREDERICK P. KEPPEL

DOCUMENT 11-C

LETTER FROM COMMISSIONER OF WELFARE WILLIAM  
HODSON TO MAYOR F. H. LA GUARDIA<sup>14</sup>

September 24, 1940

*Hon. F. H. La Guardia*  
*Mayor, City of New York*  
*City Hall*  
*New York, New York*  
DEAR MAYOR:

As I have previously reported to you, certain so-called "religious corporations" have from time to time secured charters under the Religious Corporations Act. Several of these "religious corporations" in the past have solicited funds from the public on the plea that they were providing milk and summer camps for undernourished children. Because they are organized as religious corporations, it is not necessary for them to secure a license from the Department of Welfare for the purpose of soliciting funds from the public. Consequently, this department could not determine whether they were legitimate or not in advance of active solicitations.

During the past four years the Department of Welfare, in co-operation with the Police Department and the district attorney's office, has secured convictions and appropriate sentences of some twenty persons for fraudulent solicitation. These persons represented the following organizations: "The Gates of Mercy," "The Charity Church of Christ," and "The United Relief Association." Each of these organizations was operating under a religious corporation charter.

I believe it to be my duty to bring to your attention facts which I have personally investigated during a tour of the city, concerning two organizations known as "Beacon Relief Mission" and "Charity House Mission," which are now actively soliciting. The public should have all the facts concerning them. Each of these organizations has secured a charter under the Religious Corporations Act. I have been approached by women purporting to represent these two organizations for the purpose of soliciting contributions from me, and I have observed these representatives insistently thrusting containers into people's faces in an effort to solicit funds from passers-by on the public streets. This goes on during the day and as

<sup>14</sup> This report was released for publication on Thursday, September 26, 1940.

late as twelve o'clock at night. These solicitors claim that the contributions which they solicit are used for the purpose of providing milk for children, and sometimes the claim is made that summer camps are maintained for needy children.

Reports in my possession indicate that "Beacon Relief" employs approximately twenty solicitors, and "Charity Mission" at least seven solicitors. These solicitors operate in front of the hotels and in the mid-town business section and are obnoxious in their approach to the public. The businessmen in these districts naturally object to their presence, and the public is annoyed. I have been informed by the Better Business Bureau that their investigation of the "Beacon Relief Mission" shows that the average daily receipts of this organization have been as high as \$200. I have no detailed information concerning the receipts of the "Charity House Mission" but suspect that the "take" is substantial.

On September 13, 1940, I visited the so-called "mission" of "Charity House Mission, Inc.," at 142 East Second Street. The "mission" is a small rented store furnished with a few pews. The rental is approximately \$25 per month. A minister of the gospel was formerly employed to give occasional services. This minister some time ago declined to associate himself any further with the enterprise and has furnished me with an affidavit concerning the activities of "Charity House Mission, Inc." He stated that he resigned because the work of the organization was misrepresented to him and because while he was associated with it he saw no milk whatever being distributed or any other kind of assistance. I also visited on the same day a small store operated by "Charity House Mission" at 404 East Houston Street, New York City, where milk is distributed to children in the neighborhood. The milk is supplied by the Dairymen's League, and I have been advised that 189 half-pints are purchased per day, costing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents per half-pint. The total cost of one day's milk so distributed is \$6.61 per day. I am unable to find that the "Charity House Mission, Inc.," ever operated a summer camp or that it has sent children to any camp.

On September 13, 1940, I also visited the "Beacon Relief Mission" at 7 Stanton Street, New York City. Here I found a small basement room, a cook, and two or three other employees working over a basket of badly decayed peaches. These employees told me that some fish and other food in the kitchen had been contributed as a free gift from the Wallabout market. There were some benches in the "Mission," and I was advised that services were held three nights a week, after which food was served.

The solicitors of these organizations carry so-called "credentials." I have in my possession a printed credential of a solicitor for "Charity

House Mission, Inc." Attached is a photostatic copy, and you will notice that the caption "State of New York" is in bold type and that the general tenor of the paper is intended to mislead an uninformed person into believing that this "credential" was a document of some official character or issued by some governmental agency. It is neither.

As you know, milk is provided at public expense to the children of the city through the schools, the Department of Welfare, and the Board of Child Welfare. Every day more than 143,000 quarts of milk at a daily cost of approximately \$14,000 are provided to approximately 220,000 children. In the case of "Charity House Mission, Inc.," milk costing \$6.61 is distributed. The solicitors for that organization are paid a daily wage of from \$3.00 per day to as much as 50 per cent of the amount solicited, plus a bonus. My investigation shows that on some successful days the amount paid a solicitor amounts to as much as \$8.00 per day.

Not only is the distribution of the small amount of milk by these so-called "religious corporations" wholly unnecessary, but if the generous citizens of New York who contribute to these organizations could see for themselves what is being done and the trifling amount of aid given, there would be no more contributions.

I suggest the following remedies:

1. A charter should not be issued upon application and as a matter of course to a "religious corporation" but should be issued only after a thorough investigation with recommendations from local departments of welfare or other local authority having jurisdiction.
2. The Administrative Code should be amended so as to require that any religious corporation, except a bona fide church organization, must obtain a license from the Department of Welfare to solicit funds on the streets of the city.
3. Upon the revocation of such a license for cause, proceedings should be instituted by the appropriate authority to revoke the charter of the offending religious corporation.

Yours,

WILLIAM HODSON, *Commissioner*

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## CHAPTER XII

### THE SOCIAL SERVICE EXCHANGE

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THE social services in any populous community are numerous, and the programs of many of the agencies overlap. In some cities, for example, a dependent family might apply to receive care from any one of several public and private agencies. Although these agencies ordinarily develop intake policies that reduce duplication, it is, nevertheless, necessary for them to have some means of clearance to make sure that they are not extending services to those already receiving similar care from another organization. Even though there may be no duplication in the services extended, it is beneficial for an agency to know the plans other agencies may be making for the families it is serving. For example, the services provided by the juvenile court are different from the services offered by a family welfare agency. If both of these agencies are working in the same family, however, there is an obvious need for consultation if treatment plans are to be effectively co-ordinated. Consultation is important in such instances not only because it promotes integration of effort but also because it economizes time. If the family welfare agency has completed certain collateral investigations, the juvenile court may be able to utilize the resulting data and thus avoid covering the same ground a second time. In cases currently under the care of more than one agency, clearance is likewise beneficial to the families served; for it may spare them the necessity of repeating their story several different times.

The mechanism that has been created to attain the foregoing objectives is the social service exchange, which, in some communities, is known as the "confidential exchange" or the "social service index." Physically, the exchange consists of a battery of card files. One file is a name file. Each card bears the name, address, and other identifying information concerning an individual or family known to one or more of the social agencies in the community, and, in addition, it indicates the names of the agencies that know the case. These cards are filed, either alphabetically or phonetically, by name of client. In addition, there is usually a second file

known as the "street file." The street file, though it does not show the agencies registered, does contain substantially the same identifying data as the name file. The cards in the street file are arranged by street address, however, rather than by name of client. The possibility that a client's card may be lost or overlooked is greatly reduced by maintaining the two files. In large cities there are often hundreds of clients with the same surname; and frequently a considerable number of families living in one large tenement may have addresses that are easily confused. If a search in the street file fails to disclose the card of a given client, it may be possible to identify him by looking in the name file—and vice versa. As indicated above, each card in the name file contains a list of the agencies that know the client. The date each agency registered the case at the exchange is also carried on the card. Thus the exchange is, in effect, a kind of card catalogue; for it enables an agency to ascertain whether any other organizations know a given client, and, if so, it guides the agency to the sources from which information is likely to be obtained.

#### TERMINOLOGY USED BY EXCHANGES

After considerable experimentation in an earlier period, exchange operations have now become fairly well standardized. A definite terminology<sup>1</sup> has also been adopted, though it is not yet universally used throughout the field. The basic operation performed by the exchange is called a "clearing." This is a generic term referring to a search through the files in response to any type of request from a member-agency with respect to a family or an individual. If the inquiring agency has a case record of its own, its request for information is called an "inquiry"; if it does not have a record, its request is classified as "information only." Normally an agency sends a clearing to the exchange before accepting a case for service. This means that the clearing is ordinarily one of the routines handled by the agency's intake department or by its first interviewers. If the agency plans not to accept the case, it may query the exchange for "information only" in order to refer the applicant intelligently. The agency provides the exchange only with the necessary identifying information, such as name of breadwinner and spouse, street address, names and birth dates of children. This information may be set forth on a blank uniformly used throughout the city or, in cases of emergency, may be supplied by telephone. The exchange then looks up the name in its files and sends a report to the inquiring agency. This report indicates whether any other agencies

<sup>1</sup> See *Handbook on Social Service Exchanges* (National Social Service Exchange Committee, 1940), pp. 10-11.

have previously inquired about the family and, if so, the names of these agencies and the dates of their inquiries. If other agencies have previously registered the name of the applicant, the inquiring agency can then make a contact with these agencies as a basis for determining whether it will accept or reject the application. If the inquiring agency accepts the case, it then normally notifies the exchange, whereupon the exchange routinely sends "notifications" to all agencies previously listed, indicating to them that a new agency has inquired about the case. Thus, if the inquiring agency neglects to make contacts promptly with the other organizations that have previously registered, they will nevertheless be informed that the client has made a new application. This is a service of considerable importance, especially in case any of the organizations previously registered is still actively working with the applicant.

#### AUSPICES

The earliest exchanges in this country were established about 1870 by the charity organization societies. At that time they were regarded as a device to prevent duplication of relief and it seemed appropriate, therefore, that they be operated by relief agencies. As the exchange came to be more widely used by other types of agencies, a feeling developed that it should not be exclusively identified with one functional field. The rapid growth of community chests and councils of social agencies in the period following World War I accentuated this feeling. The exchange came to be regarded as a co-ordinating agency that should serve all of the agencies in the community and be responsive to the needs of all of them. Accordingly, beginning in about 1920, a trend set in to transfer the exchange to new auspices. In some places it became an independent agency, often with a board of directors composed of representatives of the member-organizations. A more common arrangement, however, was for the community chest or the council of social agencies to assume responsibility for operating the exchange. An analysis<sup>2</sup> made in 1941 indicated that, among 289 exchanges, 90 were operated by community chests, 91 by councils of social agencies, and 33 by private welfare agencies. The remainder were either independent agencies (12) or were under public auspices (63).

Some social workers believe that, in time, most exchanges will be operated by public agencies. In the study quoted above, it was found that 22 per cent of the exchanges included in the inquiry were already adjuncts of public services. The unparalleled expansion of the public social services in the decade of the 1930's is responsible for this development. During this

<sup>2</sup> Mary L. Thompson, "The Social Service Exchange." (Mimeographed.)



decade the work of the exchange came to be dominated more and more extensively by inquiries and registrations of public agencies. In many places more than three-fourths of all clearances originated, for a period of several years, with public agencies, and in some places the proportion exceeded 90 per cent. Toward the close of the decade the decline of unemployment and the resulting contraction of home relief case loads brought about a reversal of this trend. In some places the clearances of private agencies came to be almost equal in number to those of public agencies or even to exceed them occasionally. The experiences of the exchange during this unsettled decade, therefore, suggest that the volume and type of work of the exchange is likely to be subject to marked fluctuations, depending upon the situation in the community with respect to employment, disasters and emergencies, and new social developments. Nevertheless, it also seems clear that public agency clearances are not likely to fall to the low level they often reached prior to 1930. In fact, informed observers believe that public agency clearances in the future will probably account ordinarily for half or more of all exchange activities in most communities and may periodically rise to a much higher proportion. The realization that this is likely to be the case has naturally raised a question as to why the public agency that receives the bulk of the service should not also control and pay for the operation of the exchange.

Those who oppose turning the exchange over to public control believe that it is a community-wide agency and, as such, should be jointly controlled and jointly financed by the agencies that use it. They point out that if the agencies support the exchange on the basis of paying for the service received, a considerable part of the cost will thus fall upon the taxpayer. They object to turning complete control over to a governmental authority because of the danger of political encroachments and a lowering of standards. Moreover, they believe the exchange might be less widely used if any one organization possessed it. The movement to transfer exchanges from charity organization societies to more inclusive auspices was inspired by this view, and some believe that it would be a step backward to revert to unilateral management. As the secretary of one exchange said: "... there seems to be agreement that an exchange should be a cooperative enterprise and [should] not be run by one agency, whether it is a family welfare agency or a public department. The tendency might be to have it run for the particular agency that is housing it or at least to have other agencies think this is true."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> "The Social Service Exchange—a Study Made by the Staff of the Buffalo Council of Social Agencies" (1938), p. 5. (Mimeographed.)

It has also been pointed out that there is a tendency for public agencies to cut budgets so drastically from time to time that important services may be almost destroyed. There is undoubtedly a genuine basis for this fear. New officials may come into office who have been elected on an economy platform. If they are unfamiliar with social service problems, the exchange may seem to them a good place to cut "frills." This is particularly true if the exchange has been taken over by the public agency as a result of an administrative decision. The danger of dismemberment is much less imminent if the authority to operate the exchange has been conferred by legislative action. In Ohio the legislature made it mandatory in 1939 for each of the 88 counties to establish "a central clearing office." Although many difficulties have been encountered in attempting to carry out this mandate, the statute does provide some measure of assurance that local authorities will not be able to destroy such clearance services as are established solely because a few local officials do not understand or approve of them.

Some social workers question the advisability of transferring the exchange to public auspices because of a fear that the confidential character of the records might not be scrupulously preserved. It is well known that some public agencies have, in the past, published periodically in local newspapers the names of all persons receiving public assistance. In fact, this practice still continues in some jurisdictions.<sup>4</sup> Since this policy runs counter to accepted standards of social work practice, any public agency that attempted to use exchange clearances in this way would certainly find itself in difficulties immediately with the co-operating agencies. It seems highly improbable, however, that any public agency would publicize clearances. Publication of names of clients has ordinarily been inspired by the belief that the taxpayers have a right to know who receives tax funds. No such argument can be used with respect to a large proportion of the cases cleared at the exchange. The real danger is not that names will be published but that they may be given on an informal basis to individuals or agencies that have no right to the information. Exchanges have long refused service to business credit bureaus, public legal prosecution agencies, police officers, detectives, lawyers, insurance companies, and business firms. They also decline to answer the inquiries of private individuals. The transfer of exchange operations to public auspices would un-

<sup>4</sup> Under present provisions, local public assistance agencies spending federal funds must observe the confidential nature of the information obtained from clients. Since federal funds are not at present available for general home relief, this protection does not extend to home relief cases.

doubtedly be inadvisable unless reasonable assurances were given that these established policies would be continued.

A number of cities in which the exchange operates under public auspices report satisfactory experience with this arrangement. In St. Paul the clearance service functions under the direction of the Ramsey County Welfare Board. In Detroit, where public welfare programs have been longer established than in most American cities, the exchange was for a considerable period of years operated and financed by the Department of Public Welfare. It served the double purpose of an exchange for both public and private agencies and an index of the case numbers of the Department of Public Welfare. Following a reorganization in 1941, however, a change in policy was adopted. At present the Detroit exchange is financed jointly by the users, both public and private. The costs for the agencies belonging to the community fund are paid through the budget of the Detroit Council of Social Agencies.

A special committee of the Federation of Social Agencies of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, charged with studying this question, made the following report with respect to it:

The social service exchange represents a procedure that is universally recognized as a permanent adjunct to sound social work practice. It has been developed and its value has been demonstrated through the initiative of the private social work agencies. The recent extension of public responsibility in the fields of relief and social case work demonstrates the growing stake of the public agencies in the use of the social service exchange. It also demonstrates the increasing responsibility of the public agencies toward the administration and financing of the clearing service. Consequently, the member-agencies of the Pittsburgh Social Service Exchange believe that the service now rendered by the Exchange should be a public service, financed and administered by the State of Pennsylvania.<sup>3</sup>

The Pittsburgh report reflects the point of view of those who believe that a public agency, supported by all the taxpayers of the community and indirectly controlled by them through their elected representatives, is actually more nearly a community-wide organization than any agency organized on a voluntary basis. Certainly, it has been adequately demonstrated that a clearance service is essential in communities with numerous social agencies. Since central clearance is an essential service, it would seem that the exchange should not be obliged to rely upon voluntary contributions for support. Wherever its operations can be maintained at a satisfactory level under public auspices, the exchange should operate as a public service, providing clearances free of charge to all agencies in the community.

<sup>3</sup> "The Social Service Exchange—a Study Made by the Staff of the Buffalo Council of Social Agencies," p. 4.

## UNIT COSTS

Considerable expense is involved in operating an exchange. Unit costs are figured by dividing total expenses by number of clearings. Costs per clearance vary widely among cities. In part, differences in unit costs reflect differences in scope of service offered. Thus, in one city, where the unit cost was 27 cents per clearing in 1940, the exchange offered a wider coverage than is customary in most communities. This particular exchange cleared, not only with respect to clients, but also with respect to relatives of clients. Thus an inquiry concerning John Jones would be cleared at the exchange to determine whether he was already known to other agencies and also to determine whether his near relatives, such as brothers, sisters, or parents, were known to other agencies. In addition, this exchange cleared with the records in two neighboring cities and with the files of the state department of welfare. Obviously, these added services entailed expenses that were reflected in the higher cost per clearing. The volume of activity also influences costs. After a certain point is reached, additional clearances usually involve smaller unit costs if the scope of the service remains unchanged. For example, in one city, the cost per clearance in predepression days was 17 cents. The great expansion of activity during the period of the depression reduced this figure to 14 cents per clearance, though total expenditures, of course, increased.

Caution must be exercised in comparing unit costs from community to community. In some cities the exchange receives free services, such as rent, heat, and light, from other agencies. Unless allocations are made to the expenditure figures to cover these free services, the unit-cost comparison with exchanges that meet all costs from their own budgets is not valid. Moreover, the method of calculating unit cost may differ from city to city. Although a standard method of computing this figure has been recommended,<sup>6</sup> some cities have not adopted it. Hence, before comparisons are made, care should be taken to ascertain whether comparable methods of figuring unit costs have been utilized.

In a good many cities considerable difficulty has been experienced in financing the exchange. Community chests continue to be a major source of support. When data were compiled<sup>7</sup> in 1933, 103 out of 185 exchanges studied were financed entirely by local community chests. Only 11 cities had, at that time, worked out a system of supporting the exchange by charging agencies for the service provided. Even in those cities some of the

<sup>6</sup> *Handbook on Social Service Exchanges*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>7</sup> *Financing the Exchange: A Study Made by the Social Service Exchange Commission of Community Chests and Councils, Inc.* (1933).

agencies are supported by the community chest, and a considerable part of the revenue of the exchange is, therefore, provided indirectly by the chest. Exchanges that charge for their services attempt to adjust their fees periodically in order to avoid profits. Their desire is to charge only enough to cover costs. Usually they bill the member-agencies once each month for an amount that is determined by multiplying the unit cost per clearance by the number of clearances the agency has made.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes these exchanges make a flat rate to agencies that require a large volume of service. This plan is helpful to such agencies in budgeting, for it enables them to forecast accurately how much they must provide for the clearance service. An agency that is subject to considerable variation in case load can easily find itself in financial difficulties if its expense for clearing with the exchange is exclusively on an individual-fee basis.

Some exchanges that are supported by fees nevertheless accept clearances from agencies that pay nothing. An agency may be unable to pay because its governing body refuses to make an appropriation for that purpose. This was the situation in one city with respect to one of the important public agencies. Since it was imperative for the agencies to know whether their clients were also being served by this public agency, the exchange decided to accept its registrations without charge. The member-agencies of the exchange approved of this decision because they believed the information obtained was worth the extra cost to them and because they hoped the public agency could ultimately be persuaded to bear its fair share of the expense. When the 1933 study<sup>9</sup> was made, only 5 exchanges were being supported exclusively by public agencies. In a good many cities, however, public agencies were contributing to the support of the exchange, either on the basis of a flat grant or by paying on a fee basis for services received. Since public agency clearances are usually numerous, this meant in some communities that a considerable part of the revenue of the exchange was derived from tax funds.

#### UNIVERSAL VERSUS SELECTIVE REGISTRATION

There has been some difference of opinion as to how inclusive the registrations at the exchange should be. The proponents of "universal registration" hold that agencies should record identifying information at the ex-

<sup>8</sup> Some cities have found that this method of distributing costs causes some agencies to use the exchange less freely than is desirable. An alternative method now in use in New York City, Chicago, and a number of other cities, is called the "percentage-of-use" system. Under this plan the cost is apportioned periodically among the agencies on the basis of the amount of work each agency has requested the exchange to perform.

<sup>9</sup> *Financing the Exchange: A Study Made by the Social Service Exchange Commission of Community Chests and Councils, Inc.*

change concerning all clients with whom they have contact. Some social workers think that this policy is wasteful. They point out that if an agency has only a slight contact with a client, it knows too little about him to be serviceable to other organizations. Hence they prefer a system of "selective registration." Under a policy of selective registration the agencies make no attempt to register all cases routinely. This means that they are obliged to decide which cases they will register. Obviously, the line is not always easy to draw between those cases that should and those that should not be registered—particularly in large agencies where the decisions must be made in several different offices. In general, the policy is to register all cases on which the agency has information sufficiently comprehensive in character to be of potential significance to other organizations. Of course, such a rule is not easy to apply. Sometimes an apparently trivial piece of information about a family might prove to be a very revealing clue. Nevertheless, the trend appears to be in the direction of selective registration. Resources are never sufficient to meet all the social welfare needs in a community. Hence a major objective in community organization is to establish priorities among identified needs. The trend toward selective registration appears to be in line with this objective.

#### REGISTRATION OF THE NEW SOCIAL SERVICES

The growth of new social services has also raised some interesting questions about clearances at the exchange. Should the tenants of public housing projects, for example, be registered? Some social workers have contended that these tenants have, in the main, been self-supporting. They declare that inclusion in the exchange files implies dependency or inadequacy and that these tenants should not be thus stigmatized. On the other hand, of course, tenants in public housing projects are actually not fully self-supporting in the ordinary sense of the term. In one way or another, public housing projects are subsidized from tax funds. Ordinarily, applicants for these houses are refused if their incomes exceed a specified minimum amount. This is because the purpose of the houses is to provide decent shelter for persons with incomes so low that they could not otherwise find suitable quarters at a price they can afford to pay. Hence, though these tenants pay rent, a part of the cost of providing the dwellings is met from tax funds. But people who send their children to public schools are also receiving a service that is paid for, in the main, from tax funds. It would seem that it is scarcely justifiable to register a family at the exchange merely because it receives a free or a subsidized service. Whether a case is to be registered must be decided rather on the basis of the prob-

able benefits to the family and to the local social agencies. This appears to be the basis upon which some housing authorities decided to register. One such agency gave the following explanation of its decision:

1. At the time of selection any available social history with record of financial, domestic, or health difficulties has been of great value both in determining eligibility and in understanding family problems after occupancy.

2. When problems have arisen after a family has moved in, it is very helpful, naturally, to know what agencies may have had contact with the family before, and this information makes the kind of referral job we do just that much more efficient.

3. When a family applies for assistance or consultation to any agency without coming to the management first, the fact that we are registered leads the agency to contact us, and we are able to give it what information we have and to be of some service in doing our part in connection with whatever plan the agency may work out with the family.

Thus the reasons given for registering tenants of public housing were positive. Duplication of service was obviously not a problem. The purpose of registration was to facilitate an intelligent approach to the problems of these families on the part of the management of the project and of other social agencies that might have occasion to serve them.

A definite policy with respect to clearance of the applicants for public housing has now been established. The initial uncertainty of the local authorities as to what their policy should be was dispelled by an affirmative recommendation issued by the United State Housing Authority.<sup>10</sup> It is now the accepted routine throughout the country to clear at the exchange with respect to applicants who are technically eligible for admission. The federal authority has also recommended informal clearance through direct contact with the major public and private agencies in communities where no exchange service is available.

Following the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, the question was also raised as to whether recipients of unemployment compensation should be registered at the exchange. The rates of benefit during periods of unemployment differ from state to state and from individual to individual. In some cases the benefits are not sufficient to maintain a family, and the unemployed person may have no other resources to draw upon. If unemployment continues beyond a short period, supplementary relief, therefore, becomes necessary. After studying this question, however, the Division of Standards and Procedures of the Bureau of Public Assistance of the Social Security Board decided<sup>11</sup> not to recommend routine registration of cases known to the employment security agencies. Two reasons were given for this decision. It was pointed out, in the first place,

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Housing Authority, *Suggested Procedures for Initial Tenant Selection and Renting* (Bull. 31).

<sup>11</sup> Ruth O. Blakeslee, "Regional and State-wide Exchanges" (Doc. 12-B, pp. 402-12).

that neither unemployment compensation nor employment services require information such as is obtainable from the case records of social agencies in order to establish the eligibility of the applicant for the benefit sought. The second reason given was that applicants for benefits have in their own possession the information needed by the employment security offices in determining whether they can act favorably in the case.

Presumably these statements reflect the point of view of the Social Security Board. Whether they also reflect the points of view of social agencies is not equally clear. Some agencies have said that it would be helpful to them to know when their clients are in receipt of unemployment compensation. If this information is not obtained through inquiry at the exchange, agencies have, in some cases, made arrangements to clear directly with the office of the unemployment compensation authorities. Whether it would be advisable to register all recipients of unemployment compensation is, however, a question. Large numbers of beneficiaries do not ask for any supplementary services. Hence considerable waste of time and money would be involved in recording every case at the exchange. The existing evidence suggests that it may be a better policy for agencies to inquire directly of the unemployment compensation office in the relatively small proportion of cases in which they need specific information concerning amount and duration of benefits.

The position of beneficiaries of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance is not unlike that of beneficiaries of unemployment compensation. Both receive benefits for which payments have been made by either the employer, the employee, or both. A major difference, however, is that the beneficiary of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance may not himself have performed the work with respect to which the payments were made. Often the beneficiary may be the dependent child of a deceased worker. In many of these cases the need for social services is clearly indicated. Unless the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance provides these services, there would appear to be an obligation to refer the cases to agencies that will do so. Any case so referred would undoubtedly be registered at the exchange by the agency that accepted responsibility. Whether the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance will also register all such cases routinely, regardless of the need for supplementary service from other agencies, seems not to have been decided as yet. Registration of all the bureau's beneficiaries would doubtless be wasteful; but it would seem that registration on a selective basis would be helpful. Some of the beneficiaries—particularly those just reaching the age of retirement—may not stand in need of social services. Others, particularly minor survivors, perhaps should be regis-



tered, since many will need protection and assistance for a considerable period of years. Registration of such cases at the exchange by the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance would insure the establishment of immediate contact with the bureau on the part of any child welfare agency that accepted the minor beneficiary for care.

#### REGISTRATIONS BY MEDICAL AGENCIES

Many social service exchanges have experienced difficulty in securing registrations from medical agencies. There is a well-established tradition in the medical field that the relationship between a doctor and his patients must be completely confidential. Medical institutions are for that reason usually very reluctant to record the names of patients at the exchange. Some have pointed out that they would be unwilling to give out information about their patients even though they registered them at the exchange and, as a result, received an inquiry from another local social agency. This reluctance to register patients at the exchange sometimes is a severe handicap to social agencies. If a member of a family is suffering from an infectious disease, such as tuberculosis or syphilis, the agency needs to have this information in order to develop treatment plans with the welfare and safety of all members of the family in view. Of course, most large modern hospitals and clinics now have well-established departments of hospital social service. These departments are well aware of the importance of medical information to the practicing social workers. They also desire to know about other agencies that may have served their clients. Hence most of them clear their cases at the exchange. In this way the other social agencies in the community obtain access to information about the health situations in their families. Usually, however, departments of hospital social service serve only certain selected cases from among those under care in the hospital or clinic. Hence a considerable number that receive medical care are not recorded at the exchange because the institution does not register them and the department of hospital social service does not accept them for case work treatment. In such instances other community agencies may be obliged to work with clients without an adequate understanding of their health problems. Often, of course, the relationship with the client is such that he keeps the agency informed about his medical situation. Cases have arisen, however, in which the client was reluctant to disclose his contact with a hospital or clinic, and, as a result, the case worker obtained the facts much too late to be of maximum service in helping the client to understand and to meet his problem.

## REGISTRATIONS BY INDUSTRIES

The general policy of social service exchanges is to accept clearances only from bona fide, recognized social agencies. Unless this policy were strictly observed, the names and addresses in the files might be used for commercial purposes or to exploit or intimidate the clients. Some large corporations employ social workers in their personnel departments. A question has sometimes been raised as to whether, in such cases, the personnel department of the industry should not be permitted to use the facilities of the exchange. For the most part the decision on this issue has been negative. During the depression period of the 1930's, some large corporations carried on extensive relief programs for the benefit of former employees who were out of work and in need. At that time, in some places, the usual policy of the exchange with respect to industries was suspended. Funds to meet the great volume of relief needs were very scarce, and it seemed expedient to forestall duplication by accepting inquiries and registrations from industries that were carrying on a relief program. However, the relief programs of most industries proved to be short-lived. The depression lasted much longer than was anticipated, and after governmental funds were made available the industries found it advisable to turn their relief cases over to the general relief agencies of the community. The privilege of utilizing the services of the exchange was therefore again withdrawn from the industries. The attitude of the social agencies is that the exchange must never be used in any way that could react to the disadvantage of clients. They have feared that personnel departments, if they learned that a given employee was frequently dependent upon the services extended by relief agencies, courts, and the like, might develop a negative opinion of him that would stand in the way of his advancement or even of his retention on the payroll. Hence the policy of not extending the clearance service to industries has been very generally observed.

There is also a very practical reason for not accepting clearances from industries. Such a policy would, in many communities, necessitate an enormous expansion of exchange facilities and operations. Many industrial workers never seek service from any social agency in the community. Hence, if industries participated in the exchange to any considerable extent, a very sizable complement of names would be added to those already in the files, a majority of which would probably not prove particularly helpful to inquiring agencies. In fact, large numbers of these persons would probably never be known to social agencies. The added cost to the exchange would, therefore, be difficult to justify. Moreover, the identifi-

cation of active cards would be retarded if the files contained a large amount of "dead" material. This would be an obstacle of some importance, since exchanges serve best when they can answer inquiries very promptly. Industries appear to accept the position which the exchanges have taken in this matter. In recent years there has been no active demand on their part to use the exchange. Hence it appears that the present policy is not likely to be changed.

#### THE EXCHANGE AS AN AGENCY TO RAISE STANDARDS

In some places the exchange has been used as a means of raising the standards of agencies. This has been accomplished by denying membership to agencies that do not observe acceptable practices. In such places the services of the exchange are made available only to those agencies that are accepted as members. If a new agency seeks admission, an investigation of its services is made, usually by the director of the exchange. Among other things, the exchange examines the case records of the agency. If the records are of poor quality, the application may be rejected on the ground that member-agencies would gain nothing by consulting an agency that had so little in the way of recorded data to contribute. Some exchanges also review the qualifications of the agency's employees. They do this on the theory that it is not advisable to accept agencies with an unqualified staff, since such persons would probably not understand how to make constructive use of the information obtained through the exchange. Usually the statistics are also examined to determine whether the agency carries on a volume of work sufficiently large to justify its inclusion in the exchange. Other similar criteria may also be applied, depending upon the policy of the local exchange. If the investigation results in rejection of the application, the agency can sometimes be persuaded to alter its policies in order to qualify for admission.

Undoubtedly any organization that extends service to members only is entitled to define its own membership requirements. From the standpoint of community organization, however, a question may be raised as to the number of agencies that should be working simultaneously on the problem of raising standards. Most urban centers support a council of social agencies that is definitely committed to this task. There may be, in addition, a charities indorsement bureau that uses its influence to persuade laggard agencies to improve their work. If these groups all have similar standards in view, there may be some advantage in having the inferior agencies exposed to pressure from more than one source. But if they are aiming at conflicting standards, considerable confusion may result. In some places

a tradition of consultation has been established among the groups that have an opportunity to influence standards, and, as a result, the inferior agencies receive similar advice from each group.

#### NEW FUNCTIONS SUGGESTED FOR EXCHANGES

The social service exchange has passed through some very interesting developments in its comparatively brief history, and there is no reason to believe that its potentialities have been exhausted. During its initial stage the promoters of the exchange thought of it in negative terms: its purpose was to prevent something rather than to accomplish something. If it operated in such a way as to eliminate duplication in relief-giving, its existence seemed to be justified. Later the exchange came to be regarded as a mechanism for accomplishing positive results: it provided a means of economizing time and effort. One agency would find that it could use data that had been collected by others and would thus be spared considerable labor. Clients and collaterals could likewise be protected from repeated investigations. And, most important of all, agencies could collaborate in developing plans for the treatment of families in which two or more of them were working. These benefits were soon recognized as of greater importance than the mere prevention of duplication. Recently one veteran social worker referred to the exchange as "a card catalogue to a vast library of social data." This statement points to the future of the exchange and raises interesting speculations as to what that future will be.

The suggestion has been made, for example, that the exchange might be developed into a central statistical bureau. The need for a central statistical service has become increasingly apparent in recent years. Perhaps one illustration will serve to make clear the character of this need. A few years ago a central office in Chicago collected statistics from relief agencies in a representative group of cities.<sup>12</sup> Since these cities varied considerably in size, it was necessary to convert these figures into rates in order to make comparisons. When the data were published, they showed that one city had many more cases of dependency per 10,000 population than any other community in the list. Social workers in that city instituted an investigation to ascertain the reasons for this disparity. This investigation quickly showed that the high rate of dependency in their city was due to a widespread system of supplementation. A number of private agencies in the city habitually relied upon the public relief agency to supply certain basic necessities in the families they had accepted for case work service. This

<sup>12</sup> For an account of this undertaking see A. W. McMillen, *Measurement in Social Work* (1930).

meant that large numbers of these families were included in the statistics of a private agency and also in the statistics of the public agency. When the figures for all agencies were combined, the resulting total therefore contained a large, but unknown, number of duplicates. Subsequently, in this city, a system was worked out whereby all agencies reported their statistics to a local central office in such a way that duplicates could be eliminated. Immediately, of course, the dependency rate was reduced when this major source of inaccuracy was eliminated.

Since the social service exchange has well-established relationships with most of the major agencies in the community, it is not strange that a question has been raised as to whether it could be expanded to provide a central statistical service. An expansion of this type would, of course, involve alterations in procedure. Doubtless, automatic sorting and tabulating machines would be required. However, the exchange does receive, through the registering process, a considerable part of the basic information needed in arriving at unduplicated totals for each major field of work. It would be a great advantage if this information could be used to serve two purposes.

A majority of those who have had the longest experience in operating exchanges are convinced, however, that such a development would not be desirable. They point out that the major function of the exchange is to identify cases and that this function would suffer if a new and difficult task were added to the present program. Some have also suggested that a much simpler way to eliminate duplicates is to work out a division of the field such that supplementation is not necessary. There is merit in this suggestion, particularly with respect to specific fields of work, such as family welfare. But duplicates also cut across fields. A family served by a child welfare agency, for example, may also receive service from a clinic and from a social settlement. While it is very useful to know the unduplicated number of families that received aid from children's agencies, medical agencies, and group work agencies, respectively, it is also for some purposes important to arrive at the unduplicated number of families receiving any form of social service during a given period. Such a total can be provided only by an agency that has identifying data on all cases and can, therefore, discard duplicates. In some instances, of course, it may be possible to work out a satisfactory system of making estimates without attempting to arrive at accurate totals. Figures published in the *Social Security Bulletin*, for example, give totals for each of the various fields of public assistance and also an estimated unduplicated total figure for each state and for the United States. Doubtless, the Social Security Board would prefer to pub-

lish an exact total for each state. Nevertheless, the figures quoted, which are always given in round numbers to indicate that they are estimates, may be sufficiently accurate to serve the purposes for which they are used.

Agreement is very general that there is need for improvement in the accuracy of the statistics available for community social planning. If figures contain large numbers of duplicates, they may be too inaccurate to use. Yet communities are obliged to form some judgments as to the size and character of the problems they hope to solve. Ultimately, each community must decide how the necessary information can be collected. In some cities where supplementation is not widely practiced, the problem of duplication in the statistics may not be serious. Perhaps in such places means can be worked out to arrive at community-wide totals without setting up new machinery. In other places it may be that data sufficiently accurate for use in formulating policies can be obtained only by refining existing procedures. Where this is the case, it may be that the social service exchange is not the most promising locus for the effort. Some students of the problem believe that the best move would be to expand and improve the statistical services that have been instituted in community chests and in councils of social agencies. Many of these bureaus already receive monthly statistical reports routinely from a large proportion of all social agencies in their communities. Very few, if any, however, collect material that would enable them to eliminate duplicate counts among the various reporting agencies. In some places it would appear that duplicates could be discarded only by collecting in the statistical office of the chest or council many of the facts about individual clients that are now reported to the social service exchange. Such an arrangement would, of course, involve a very considerable expansion of the work of the central statistical bureau.

It is interesting to note that in a recent study entitled *Social Breakdown*,<sup>13</sup> the exchange was utilized in eliminating the duplicates from the statistics used. This was done, not by clearing with the exchange, but by asking the exchange to supply the data. In this study several criteria of "social breakdown" were adopted, such as commitment to a mental hospital, conviction for crime, etc. Since several of these phenomena might occur in one family, it was necessary that each be cleared to make sure that each family was counted only once regardless of whether it suffered from one or from several kinds of social breakdown during the year. The social service exchange adapted its procedures to meet this need, and the results were pronounced satisfactory by those in charge of the study. This experi-

<sup>13</sup> Bradley Buell, *Social Breakdown* (1939).

ence cannot be regarded, of course, as conclusive proof that it would be wise to expand exchanges throughout the country into year-round central statistical bureaus. It does suggest, however, that registration of basic data on cases and the compilation of unduplicated statistics are complementary activities and that communities need to find some way in which the two can be effectively and economically related.

Regardless of whether the exchange takes on statistical activities in the future, it seems clear that it will be increasingly used in connection with social research. It is, as has been said, "a vast card catalogue." It leads directly into firsthand sources of information concerning the problems that communities need to study. Of course, the files of the exchange do not themselves contain the data needed by investigators. But the registrations sometimes indicate, at least in a general way, the kind of problem the client has faced. If the Department of Aid to Dependent Children has registered, it is fair to assume that there are minor children in the family. If, in addition, certain departments of hospital social service have registered, it may be that some of these children present health problems. Thus an investigator who was studying the medical needs of dependent children in the community, might, by noting the registrations, find his way quickly to the cases he wished to analyze. There are, of course, obvious limitations to this approach. In many instances a registration could not be accepted as *prima facie* evidence that a certain type of problem exists or that a certain kind of service has been rendered. The best that can be said is that, within the existing system, the exchange might enable an investigator to locate a satisfactory sample of a desired type of case more quickly than he could obtain it by making the rounds of the agencies in the community.

At an early period in the history of the exchange, an attempt was made in some places to compile considerable information about the cases registered. At that time the files contained information not unlike that now found on face sheets in case records. Investigators were retained to call on families in an effort to keep this information up to date. This early experience was not a success. It was never possible to keep the information at the exchange sufficiently current to be of use to inquiring agencies and individuals. Hence the experiment was abandoned in favor of the present system of recording identifying data only, together with the names of the agencies that know the client. Unquestionably the present system is very much better than the earlier plan. It may be, however, that exchanges will ultimately decide to experiment with some additional recording that would indicate somewhat more definitely the kinds of problems presented in a family. It is difficult to predict whether such a development would

succeed. Certainly it would encounter obstacles. Problems are not always identified in families in the first weeks of contact. Moreover, new problems spring up in families that have been under care for long periods of time. The task of reporting these matters as they arose might impose an unwarranted burden upon the agencies. Moreover, the classification of problems is not simple. Some guidance in this area has been provided by functional agencies, however, as, for example, the list of "problems identified" that appears on Statistical Card No. 1, published by the Family Welfare Association of America. The exchanges have considered some of these possibilities at their annual conferences but have not as yet formulated final conclusions with respect to them. It is entirely possible that the burden of entering additional clues on the cards would outweigh the potential value of the information to research workers. At any rate, the central file, even with its present limited volume of information, has already proved to be very useful in some kinds of social-research activities.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The first social service exchanges operated exclusively on a local basis. Until recently, only a few had ever attempted to reach beyond the boundaries of the local community. Among these was the Boston exchange which, for some years, has provided a system of clearance with other exchanges in the state. But, in the main, exchanges have served local agencies only, possibly with some coverage of adjacent suburban areas. There has been, for some time, of course, a system of intercity clearance. This means that one exchange, at the request of one of its member-agencies, asks an exchange in another city to clear with respect to a client who is believed to be known by agencies in that city. This is quite different, however, from providing a total exchange service for an area larger than the local community. It is merely a service in behalf of a relatively small number of specific clients and can be counted on only in case there is a well-organized exchange in the city to which the request is forwarded. The expansion of the social services, particularly after 1935, has occasioned widespread discussion of the need for wider geographic coverage. A report of the state Department of Public Welfare in New Hampshire indicates that a system of state-wide clearance and registration is in process of development there.<sup>14</sup> In 1939, a state-wide clearance service was instituted in West Virginia on an experimental basis, under the direction of the West

<sup>14</sup> *Report of the State Board of Public Welfare and Its Successor, the Division of Welfare of the State Board of Welfare and Relief for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1936* (Concord, N.H., 1937).



Virginia State Department of Public Assistance.<sup>15</sup> The central office accepts registrations from the 55 county departments and from other public agencies. It does not include any of the private social agencies in the state. Throughout the country there has been considerable discussion of this experiment. In some places small-scale studies have been launched to determine whether a state-wide exchange would be desirable. If the number of inquiries identified is small, it is clearly not advisable to collect registrations from all sections of the state. One study showed that very few of the cases registered from most of the counties ever applied for assistance in other counties. In other words, the state-wide exchange provided very little assistance beyond what would have been available in a county-wide exchange. Even in California, where the migration of low-income families is a conspicuous phenomenon, the exchanges abandoned a system of inter-exchange clearance which they had started some years earlier. A major reason for this action was that the percentage of identifications was small. Moreover, migrant families often present emergency situations which must be handled so promptly that there is not time for identification and consultation with agencies in remote sections of the state. At the present time, therefore, it is by no means clear that it would be sound to develop exchanges on a state-wide basis. Perhaps data derived from present experiments may indicate the wisest course to follow. Probably the answer will not be the same for all states. In the smaller and more populous states along the eastern seaboard, a system of state-wide clearance would doubtless be more serviceable than in the agricultural states of the South and the Middle West. The need for a prompt response to inquiries also suggests that states with large areas and states containing large cities might not be able to operate a state-wide exchange successfully with the means of communication now available.

Some social workers believe that regional exchanges would, in many sections of the country, be more serviceable than state-wide exchanges. At a conference in Chicago it was pointed out that registrations from near-by counties in northern Indiana would result in a much larger proportion of identifications than registrations from the down-state counties of Illinois. The situation described in Chicago prevails in many parts of the country. Natural areas of trade and well-worn routes of migration frequently cross state lines. The two large cities of Missouri are both adjacent to sizable communities with which they have natural relationships, though in both instances the near-by cities are in other states. The social agencies in Cincinnati have more reason to clear with the adjacent agen-

<sup>15</sup> See Doc. 12-A, pp. 394-401.

cies in Kentucky than with some of the other cities in Ohio. Regional exchanges are, however, difficult to operate and difficult to finance. If the natural area includes portions of more than one state, there is no state agency that can readily assume responsibility for developing the system. This means that the local communities must undertake the task of organizing the joint service. Sometimes the smaller communities in the area are reluctant to participate; for they fear domination by the larger city and have doubts as to whether the service they receive will be worth the proportion of the costs they will be expected to bear. Nevertheless, existing evidence suggests that regional exchanges are likely to be developed in some sections of the country. This will probably be done under the leadership of private agencies, at least during an initial period of experimentation. If the results should indicate that a system of regional clearances is productive, it might be possible to interest public authorities. Arrangements could be provided through a system of interstate compacts, such as has been tried in other fields. In that case the agreements would be reached presumably through joint consultation of the departments of welfare of the states concerned. Another possibility would be for a federal agency, such as the Social Security Board, to supervise the development of plans in selected areas in which regional clearance promised to contribute to the effectiveness of programs to which federal funds are allocated.

#### EXCHANGES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Up to the present the great majority of social service exchanges have been located in urban centers. In view of the growth of social services in rural areas, an interesting question has arisen as to whether exchanges would now prove useful in these smaller communities also. No final answer to this question has as yet been provided. To some extent population is a determining factor. Counties with less than 20,000 population, for example, may have a surprising number of social service programs in operation, but the informal and personal character of the relationships among those administering them insures a certain measure of clearance. Whether in such a county an exchange would be worth its cost has not yet been demonstrated. It has sometimes been suggested that small counties might be better advised to organize a master-index rather than a social service exchange. The major distinction between the two is that a social service exchange notifies registered agencies concerning new inquiries, while the master-index does not undertake any service program and is simply a file that contains identifying information about the cases known by the participating agencies. Each agency is responsible for seeing that cards are

filed in the index on all cases it is serving. Any agency that wishes to clear a case sends a worker personally to the index to consult it. Usually the index is kept in some central place, such as the courthouse, and is nominally in charge of some agency that assumes responsibility for safeguarding the records. Obviously a master-index is a poor substitute for a full-fledged exchange. Nevertheless, in the less populous communities an index may prove very serviceable and may lead to the development of an exchange whenever experience reveals a need for that type of service.

#### STATE AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OF EXCHANGES

A comparatively recent movement in the exchange field has been the development of state-wide organizations of exchanges. The existing exchanges—most of them in cities—have banded together into leagues or associations of exchanges in a number of states, including California, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. A major purpose of these associations is to study the new problems confronting the exchanges, particularly such questions as geographic coverage, state-wide and regional clearance, exchange service in rural areas, auspices, and finance. It is now generally recognized that a clearance service is indispensable in any jurisdiction where a considerable number of social services are offered under separate administrative auspices. The increasing tendency of the state governments to supervise local social services and, in some instances, to administer them suggests that some of the problems of clearance must be approached on a state-wide basis. This will undoubtedly be true, even in states where one or more interstate regional exchanges may develop. The development of the state associations, therefore, provides assurance that there will be careful advance study of the problems likely to be raised by efforts to expand clearance services to sections not now served by exchanges.

For some years there has been a widespread belief that important new developments lie ahead of the exchange. For that reason a national committee was organized to study current problems of exchanges and to provide consultation service. Since so many of the exchanges operate as a part of the local community chest or council of social agencies, the national committee was developed under the guidance of the national agency in that field—namely, Community Chests and Councils, Inc. In the few years of its existence this committee has arranged numerous meetings and conferences, has conducted studies of exchange operations, and has published material relating to the work of the exchanges. The work of the committee has thus been very useful in arousing interest in the exchange

as a valuable mechanism in the community organization process. Increased interest has, in turn, led to the posing of new questions. Some of these questions may be answered by studies, but some apparently will require the trial-and-error method of experimentation. The future of some type of clearance service seems to be assured; but undoubtedly, as time goes on, some changes may be expected in structure, in coverage, and possibly also in function.

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## DOCUMENT 12-A

### DEVELOPMENTS IN STATE-WIDE CLEARANCE PLANS<sup>16</sup>

The past year has undoubtedly seen more interest in, and discussion of, social service exchanges and the broad problem of clearance of information between the tax- and voluntary-supported social services than has been evidenced by the public and administrative officials since the social programs began to take definite form in the 1870's. This appreciation of the excellent work which has been quietly but effectively done by social service exchanges in years past brings more forcibly to our attention the question of whether the traditional scope of the exchange should now be expanded so that it can more completely answer the problems which have developed as a result of the vast expansion of the public assistance and social welfare programs in the last decade.

The Office of Government Reports is not directly connected with the administration of any of the welfare programs, but, in our capacity as a co-ordinating agency, we have been seriously interested, for the last two and a half years, in the development of a more satisfactory exchange of information between the various federal, state, local, and voluntary agencies administering the several social welfare programs. The West Virginia Central Clearance Index was established after the various tax-supported agencies involved had decided to develop an experimental clearance system in a state which had fairly typical problems. West Virginia was chosen because it had an agricultural, as well as an industrial, population and because, although there was an integrated Department of Public Assistance, the voluntary agencies had made no effective concerted effort to develop an adequate clearance system.

The West Virginia Index was the first state-wide clearance system to be set up under public auspices. The Index operates as a division of, and is wholly financed by, the state Department of Public Assistance. The Index is *not* designed to provide an administrative or statistical control but has three very definite goals:

1. To provide better service to the client by expediting action on applications, promoting co-ordination of agencies giving assistance, eliminating unnecessary investigations, and protecting the client's privacy by directing inquirers only to the agencies which have case histories.

<sup>16</sup> Executive Office of the President, Office of Government Reports, Washington, D.C., May 28, 1940.

2. To avoid *inadvertent* duplications and overlapping of benefits, thus making it possible to give assistance to a larger number of needy persons or increase the average grant without increasing total expenditures.

3. To effect administrative economies by making available to the inquiring agencies a complete record of all sources of information regarding the applicant.

Installation of the West Virginia Index was started on April 1, 1939, and required a period of four months. The active case loads of the participating agencies as of that date were used in setting up the records, and, of course, all subsequent applications have been registered. The name file now covers approximately 180,000 household groups, and there are in excess of 200,000 listings in the address file. Participating agencies include direct relief, Old Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children, Aid to the Blind, Farm Security, N.Y.A., W.P.A., Civilian Conservation Corps, Unemployment Compensation, Workmen's Compensation, and the various service cases of the Department of Public Assistance.

The 55 county offices of the state Department of Public Assistance, which administer the direct relief and categorical assistance programs as well as certification to W.P.A. and surplus commodities, are the primary sources of information for the Index records. All applications for public assistance are cleared through the Index before any case investigation is undertaken, thus directing the case investigator immediately to the source records. With very few exceptions, clearances are made by mail. There is a maximum of 24-hour mail service between all points in the state and the Index at Charleston. All inquiries are answered on the day of their receipt. Telephone clearance is available in case of necessity but is discouraged.

Approximately two hundred inquiries are received per day from participating agencies. Maintenance operations, however, involve processing a minimum of five to six thousand incoming documents per week. The West Virginia Index is operated by a supervisor and a staff of eight clerks, with the assistance of an average of four N.Y.A. workers who are used for some of the typing and proofing operations. The Index is currently housed in the state Capitol, and its budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, was \$14,230. No rent, heat, or light charges are included in this figure, although printing, postage, and communications are covered.

The West Virginia Index was the first of its type to use visible equipment. Although this type of equipment is considerably higher in original cost than vertical filing, it was felt that the time required in both searching and posting is so reduced that the additional initial cost would be more

than compensated for by operating economy. The cost of the West Virginia installation, based on 150,000 household group cards with corresponding strips in the address file, was approximately \$23,902, including both equipment and personnel. Thus the total cost for installing one household group card and the corresponding strips in the address file, was approximately 16 cents, including equipment. Personnel and equipment costs each represent approximately 50 per cent of this figure. The majority of the installation personnel was provided through W.P.A. and N.Y.A. projects.

The West Virginia Central Index varies from the pattern followed by the historical social service exchange in the following major respects:

1. It is under public, rather than private auspices.
2. Coverage is state-wide from a single central office.
3. Unemployment compensation benefits and employment service placements are cleared, and selective registrations made on those cases.
4. "Start" and "stop" dates of financial benefits are posted.
5. The original search is made to the name-card rather than to the address file.

Public auspices were necessary in West Virginia, as there was no effective council of social agencies or other voluntary-supported group which was in a position to assume leadership. The state of West Virginia is small enough and communications between the county seats and Charleston sufficiently rapid so that it was felt that a state-wide central index was practicable.

The clearance of unemployment compensation benefits and employment service placements was undertaken on an experimental basis. It is probably still too early to make a final determination as to the effectiveness of these clearances. To date, however, approximately 15 per cent of the unemployment compensation beneficiaries have been identified, and an average of nearly 10 per cent of the recipients have been found to be members of family groups which are currently receiving some form of public assistance. It is even more difficult to evaluate the clearance of employment service placements, for, although over 10 per cent of the placements are on individuals whom the Index shows are currently receiving assistance, there is no way for the Index to determine the permanency of the placement.

It must be remembered that in West Virginia the Index does not record assistance or social services rendered by the voluntary-supported agencies.

"Start" and "stop" dates on financial benefits granted by the tax-supported agencies are posted for two reasons: (1) because it is felt that where the Index is designed to direct the case investigator to source records, she should also be given an indication of those which have the most important current implications, and (2) to avoid a large volume of unnecessary and undesired notifications, which the Index now provides only to agencies which have "open" cases. There has been much discussion of the practice of posting the "start" and "stop" dates—and a great deal of misunderstanding on the subject. Many have been under the impression that the *amount* of benefits was being posted. This is not true, and, in fact, the Office of Government Reports has taken a very definite stand against the posting of amounts, as it is our feeling that, in the first place, this would not be socially desirable and, second, the volume of posting required would far outweigh any possible benefits received. With respect to the posting of "start" and "stop" dates, the Index has just completed an interesting six weeks' survey. During that time it was found that, although slightly more than 56 per cent of the documents processed by the Index were "start" and "stop" notices, an average of a little less than 12 per cent of the time of the clerical force was required for sorting, searching, posting, and preparing notifications on these notices.

The usual procedure for searching is reversed in West Virginia, as it was discovered that less than 45 per cent of those registered in the file had identifying addresses. In many instances there was not even an R.F.D. route number, with the result that there is a substantial number of names arranged alphabetically under each town in the address file. By making the first search in the name file, therefore, a double alphabetical search is avoided. In those cases where the inquiry is not located in the name file, the address file is then searched.

There have been many conflicting statements regarding the effectiveness of the West Virginia Index. The value of the Index to the state Department of Public Assistance, however, has been expressed by Mr. A. W. Garnett, director, in the following words: "... We regard the Central Clearance Index as an essential feature of the department. We find it an effective method of preventing unintentional duplication and overlapping of benefits, and, as a result, a more permanent, accurate, and complete source of information is available to case workers. As a result of our experience with this Index, there has been a tendency in the private agencies to make more studies on the necessity of clearance between all agencies, private and public."



The experience gained in West Virginia has been invaluable, but a careful analysis of the situation there and elsewhere has convinced us that there is no single plan which can be applied to achieve the ultimate goal of effective state-wide clearance. Certainly, some form of state-wide clearance is a most desirable adjunct of efficient administration for social welfare agencies, but the pattern of that clearance must be varied from state to state because of differences in social and geographic conditions and because of the variations in effectiveness of existing clearance mechanisms.

The Office of Government Reports believes that in considering new clearance facilities in any state, it is most important that:

1. No attempt be made to substitute a mechanical device for social case work;
2. The development be on the level of functional activity, instead of attempting to take any political subdivision as a unit;
3. Present services be strengthened and expanded rather than to attempt to set up a duplication of existing facilities;
4. Financial support be so devised that continuity is assured; and
5. A quasi-public advisory board be charged with setting up adequate standards for participating agencies and proper protection of the confidential nature of the files.

The Central Index is not, and must never be allowed to become, a substitute for social work. It is designed merely to direct the case worker to source records and is not intended to furnish per se information on which a decision regarding the applicant's eligibility can be based.

In the April 5, 1940, statement entitled "Organization and Administration of the Confidential Exchange," the Social Security Board states:

Coverage may be considered from three points of view: by geographical distribution, by agencies within a geographical unit, and by selection of cases to be registered.

A confidential exchange may operate to serve a state, a region within a state, or a local community. It is generally accepted that it is desirable to have clearance service covering natural areas of population, which do not always conform with the boundaries of the political subdivisions. In general the study preliminary to establishing an exchange would determine the logical and practical geographical coverage to assure appropriate registrations and prompt service.

In this connection I might add that in only one of the states with which we are now working is a single state-wide index being considered. That state is Rhode Island, where the limited distances within the state make a central state-wide clearance desirable. On the other hand, Indiana is planning the development of a series of area indexes, which, it is hoped,

will eventually expand so that state-wide coverage will be effected through the five or seven area units. The question of coverage is one which can be decided only after a careful analysis of the situation by those who are thoroughly familiar with local conditions. In general, it is our feeling that the county should be the smallest unit considered and that in the interests of effectiveness and administrative economy the area to be served be as large as local conditions will justify.

It is our feeling that participating agencies should include all social agencies, tax-supported and voluntary, in the area covered that can meet the standards established by the advisory board and whose records contain significant social data. We believe that coverage should not be limited to those agencies granting financial assistance but should embrace all the social services, including institutional care and public health services.

An index to be effective must be assured of continuity and should not be subjected to the whims of legislative appropriations or the fluctuating degree of importance in the social welfare field of any single tax-supported agency. A strong advisory board, at least quasi-public in character, can offer the best protection by providing for periodic payment by all participating agencies of a portion of the operating expenses, based on a schedule recommended by the board and approved by the agencies. This is most desirable, whether the index be under public or private auspices, as joint financial support will not only assure greater permanency but will also help avoid the domination which might develop if the support was from tax funds alone. There may be instances where an agency, not at the moment in a position to make a financial contribution, desires to register its cases. If that agency complies with the minimum standards, it should be allowed to use the index until it is in a position to pay its share of the cost.

It is of the utmost importance that any index be provided with a strong and capable advisory board, as the board is responsible for the planning and administration of the index, and should be expected to provide the necessary safeguards as to the confidential nature of the records, standards for participating agencies, and financial support. The board should be representative of all the participating agencies, both tax-supported and voluntary, the lay public, and professional workers. Members of the board should be appointed for overlapping periods and should provide geographic, as well as agency, coverage.

Adequate provisions safeguarding the confidential nature of the records must be established. The 1939 Amendments to the Federal Social Security Act require that, effective January 1, 1941, public assistance plans must

provide safeguards which restrict the use or disclosure of information concerning applicants and recipients to purposes directly connected with the administration of public assistance. In many states legislation will be necessary before the state agency can meet these requirements. A central index operated under the auspices of a state welfare agency, approved by the Social Security Board, will then have this legal safeguard. An appropriate state regulation to safeguard the records of an index should:

1. Fix the responsibility for custody of the records with the advisory board and the director
2. Establish safeguards with respect to participating agencies; such safeguards should include:
  - a) Evidence that the participating agency has as its purpose the enhancement of the personal welfare of individual citizens
  - b) Agreement that the information obtained will be used only in the interest and for the benefit of the individual or his family
  - c) Evidence that the staff of the agency who will have access to the information provided by the index are of competence and integrity and are under the direction and control of an executive who assumes responsibility for protection of the records
  - d) Evidence that the agency has record-keeping facilities which are not open to the public
3. Prescribe the conditions under which clearance service is available
4. Limit the information that is available to the general public to summary fiscal and operating reports

The Office of Government Reports is not attempting to initiate interest in the development of state-wide clearance, and undertakes an analysis of a suggested program only upon invitation of the governor, the welfare director, the council of social agencies, or other responsible officials within a state. Any plans for an index should be developed within the state at the local level through a series of conferences among the agencies involved. Once a detailed plan has been approved by the local participating agencies, it is submitted through the Washington headquarters of the Office of Government Reports to an interdepartmental committee made up of representatives of the interested federal agencies. This committee will then make recommendations for such changes in the plan as may be necessary before any grants can be approved for federal participation in the administrative expense of the index. The widespread interest in clearance procedures has focused public attention on the development of state-wide clearance facilities. Public apprehension as to the duplication of services and benefits is undoubtedly much greater than is warranted by the facts. The development of adequate clearance procedures can have the dual purpose of providing what might be considered an insurance policy for the

public and at the same time enhancing the value of the social service agencies to the individual applicants. If the expansion of existing clearance facilities is to be directed along the most effective lines, those of you who are actively connected with existing exchanges must take the leadership, start constructive planning, and guide the interest in the proper direction rather than permit those less well-informed to send it on devious detours.

The interest of the Office of Government Reports is in co-ordinating these developments in an advisory, rather than a supervisory, capacity. We sincerely hope we can work with you effectively for the common good and that you will feel free to call on us whenever we can be of assistance.

PHILIP C. HAMBLET

*Special Assistant, Office of Government Reports*

## DOCUMENT 12-B

### REGIONAL AND STATE-WIDE EXCHANGES<sup>17</sup>

"Government," according to Mr. Millspaugh, "was from the beginning of civilization necessary and inevitable; and it has become in late years an intimately personal and consciously difficult social adventure."<sup>18</sup> Pressing needs and limited resources to meet those needs have given rise to a wide variety of new social services under public auspices. We believe that those services have been necessary and desirable. But there can be no question that the scope and variety of services that have been rapidly developed under public auspices have created some new problems for public and voluntary organizations, for taxpayers, and for those who seek to make use of social services. The need for co-ordination of social services has been universally recognized, but most poignantly perhaps by the agencies, public and voluntary, that were attempting to carry out these services in a confused and shifting order.

It was natural that these agencies should turn to the tested device of the confidential exchange as one method of facilitating co-ordination of social services. The confidential exchange has for many years served as a clearing house for social agencies. In the course of the past few years there has been considerable experimentation in the use of the exchange. A brief review of some of this experience may be of interest to communities now exploring the possibilities for the installation or extension of exchange service.

The confidential exchange, for purpose of this discussion, is limited to that clearance service that maintains card indexes of the names, addresses, and pertinent identifying information on case records of individuals or families who have applied for service from the social agencies in the community. The files of the exchange contain no detailed information as to the needs or histories of families registered and no information on the services rendered by an agency in a particular situation. The exchange limits its services to reporting to an agency inquiring about a family the names of agencies that have previously registered an interest in that fami-

<sup>17</sup> A paper by Ruth O. Blakeslee, chief of the Division of Standards and Procedures, Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Board, delivered May 28, 1940, at the National Conference of Social Work in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Published by Community Chests and Councils, Inc., as Social Service Exchange Bull. 30, May, 1940.

<sup>18</sup> A. C. Millspaugh, *Public Welfare Organization* (1935), p. 3.

ly and the dates of registration. The registering agencies then consult and plan for next steps and such co-operative services as they may agree to render.

The confidential exchange may advise with agencies as to the content and methods of reporting between agencies but is vested with no authority and charged with no responsibility for interagency relationships or the action of any registering agency in a particular situation. The agencies admitted to participation in the exchange are limited to those operating to serve the social needs of individuals and families in the community. The exchange service enables these agencies to share their knowledge about a particular family and to co-operate voluntarily in rendering better service to that family. The results to the agency are (1) increased efficiency through quick focusing of plans for necessary investigation or action, (2) economy through a saving of time, energy, and money in the elimination of unnecessary investigation and inadvertent duplicate service, and (3) increased effectiveness through planned and selective use of specialized services. The results to the applicant for social services are (1) easier and speedier access to appropriate service, (2) protection from being shunted back and forth between agencies in his search of help, and (3) reduction of the emotional strain of frequent repetition of his problem and his story. The true clearance function paves the way to improved performance by expediting positive action on the part of agencies that have been established to provide services to people who are in trouble. The exchange, to meet this responsibility, sets as its objective the submission of prompt and accurate reports to inquiring agencies at little cost and must limit its function to that objective. Experiments have been made in the last few years in using the exchange organization for purposes other than clearance. The exchange, in various communities, has been used as a central statistical bureau, as an automatic check on duplicate services, and to report to inquiring agencies on kinds of service or amounts of assistance. It has been generally found, however, that the assumption by the exchange of any authority or administrative control over participating agencies or the performance by the exchange of any duties that intercepted consultation between agencies or substituted for case work service detracts from the greater usefulness of clearance service and tends to make the exchange a restrictive and repressive device rather than a facilitating service.

A clear statement of function is a necessary precursor to the organization of an exchange. Function is determined not only by purpose and philosophy, however, but grows logically and naturally out of the *structure* of the exchange, or what it is equipped to do, and *usage*, or methods of

using its service by participating agencies. Before proceeding to set up an exchange, careful study of the territory to be served should be undertaken by the planning body. Some eight states have experimented with the operation of clearance services on a state-wide basis. Several of these states that are small in area and whose agencies operate to all intents and purposes on a state-wide basis, have found it practical to have a single exchange office providing clearance service for the entire state. Others have found it more practical to have a state clearance agency co-operating with local clearance agencies in small cities or towns. Several states have experimented with county clearance services operating under state direction, but none of these latter experiments, so far as I know, have survived. The general consensus seems to be that the units of operation of clearance service should be determined by the natural areas of population to provide for regional clearance service co-ordinated with a master-exchange operating in the largest city of the region or state.

The particular kind of co-ordination that results from exchange service would indicate that physical proximity of the confidential exchange to the community it serves is important because it promotes between agencies smoother working relationships and fuller understanding of problems of common concern. Distance is no barrier to discussion of major issues but it is the trivia of unimportant detail that make or break the team play of a co-operative enterprise. The personnel of an exchange must be interested in office management and derive satisfaction from the routine of an orderly and efficient job. The successful operation of an exchange, however, is also a community organization job demanding a high degree of professional skill and a professional identification with the total social work program of the community. The executive of the exchange needs the stimulation of constant association with the personnel of the participating agencies to vitalize and make effective the clearance service and to maintain the understanding and mutual respect that contribute directly to the quality of the total program. The confidential exchange that serves a particular community need not be *in* that community, but it needs to be *of* the root, branch, and stem of that community to the extent of being readily available and in continuous contact with social planning and organized action.

Before leaving the subject of geographical area I would like to mention two variations of the state-wide exchange. First, the leagues of local exchanges in some sections of the country provide intercity clearance between urban areas without attempting to effect state-wide coverage. The expansion of coverage of these exchanges might effectively provide state-

wide coverage with little effort or expense if state-wide coverage is desirable. Second, several states have experimented with registration of state-wide services under public or voluntary auspices in the exchange of the largest city of the state.

There is obviously no one pattern to be recommended for the geographical area of coverage within a state-wide clearance system. The Social Security Board would recommend that a new exchange be organized only after careful study and co-operative planning by all the agencies concerned. Steps to organize a confidential exchange should be taken only after it has been determined that:

1. There is no established exchange appropriate or adaptable to the needs of the community;
2. There are a sufficient number of agencies in the community that maintain acceptable standards of practice, appropriate records, and adequate safeguards for confidential information to justify the operation of an exchange;
3. These agencies are willing to use the exchange and to participate in financing and administering its services;
4. The area of coverage is appropriate to make possible prompt reporting of information pertinent to the services of participating agencies.

When the geographical area of coverage has been decided upon, a planning body, representative of agencies within that area, is needed to plan the structure of the exchange in which they are to participate. Because of the widespread interest in the subject of clearance service the Social Security Board, with the co-operation of other federal departments, and the Social Service Exchange Committee of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., has formulated a Statement of Principles of Organization and Administration of the Confidential Exchange. The principles of organization and administration cover eight aspects of administration, which are as follows:

I. Auspices; II. The Advisory Board; III. Personnel; IV. Standards for Participating Agencies; V. Equipment and Management; VI. Coverage; VII. Finance; and VIII. The Confidential Nature of Records.

#### I. AUSPICES

The confidential exchange should be organized as a separate agency or a relatively independent department of an established agency operating for the specific and limited purpose of performing a clearing-house service for participating agencies. The auspices under which the confidential ex-



change is developed may be a federation of agencies, a public department, or a voluntary agency and should be such as to: serve and protect the function of the exchange; assure participation of all interested agencies in planning and finance without domination by any one agency; and promote efficient, accurate, continuous, and economical service.

. . . . .

## II. ADVISORY BOARD

The planning and administration of a confidential exchange should be guided by an advisory board appointed by a responsible authority, such as the agency under whose auspices the confidential exchange is organized. The size of the board will vary with the number of agencies to be served and the geographical coverage. The board should be representative of the participating agencies, public and voluntary, and the lay public. The board members should serve for stated periods, for overlapping terms, and for a limited number of terms to assure continuity of service and gradual infiltration of new members. The board should serve without compensation except for expenses incurred in attendance at meetings.

The advisory board should be consulted on the appointment of the executive; establish standards of personnel and approve appointment of subordinate staff of the exchange; approve policy recommended by the executive; approve methods of finance, and formulate methods of apportioning cost among participating agencies for ratification by those agencies; publish an annual report; and interpret the work of the exchange to the community.

A few comments on the responsibilities for interpretation of the advisory board may be of special interest here. About a year ago a prominent newspaper carried an article on the installation of a confidential exchange. This article included the following statements:

All the case worker has to do is to consult the index, find out what relief the family is receiving and what the status of each member of the family is, and then call. From the visit and the information at his disposal he can make his decision on the case.

During the first month of its installation . . . removal of families receiving duplicate benefits saved enough money to pay for the complete installation.

Those setting up the system found it difficult to get co-operation from all the agencies throughout the State because of animosities and jealousies.<sup>19</sup>

An advisory board working with the exchange, interpreting the functions and methods of participating agencies, and reviewing statements for

<sup>19</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, July 23, 1939. Sec. II, pp. 1, 5, "Central Index to Relief Roll Slashes Costs," James G. Simonds.

publication might have performed a distinct service to the exchange. The errors in fact are apparent, but even erroneous statements that reflect on the recipients of public assistance and on agencies administering services to them undermine the self-respect of recipients of public assistance and their confidence in the public agency and jeopardize the support of the public agency as well as of the exchange. No public service can enhance its prestige by reflecting discredit on the agencies or individuals it is established to serve. An advisory board representative of participating agencies might have corrected misunderstanding and assisted in preparing for release information that would have served more constructive purposes.

### III. PERSONNEL

The minimum staff of the exchange should consist of at least two people:

1. An executive whose qualifications conform with the standards set up by the Social Service Exchange Committee of Community Chests and Councils.<sup>20</sup> The executive should have: a community organization point of view with understanding and well-balanced interest in all fields represented by participating agencies; executive ability and competence in office management; qualities of leadership; and demonstrated experience in public education.
2. A subordinate staff of the requisite number of clerical personnel, who will be available to give immediate reports on inquiries at all times throughout the working day. In addition to clerical training, it is extremely important that this person have full knowledge and acceptance of responsibilities for safeguarding the confidential nature of information in the exchange files.

### IV. STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

The advisory board of the confidential exchange should formulate objective standards to be applied in admitting agencies to participate in the exchange; approve applications for admission; and take necessary steps to assure continued compliance with regulations of the exchange. The standards for participating agencies in a particular community should be designed to serve the needs of that community by including agencies whose personnel and practice are adequate to insure the use of clearance service in the interest of families and individuals whose names are registered in the exchange and to insure the protection of information obtained

<sup>20</sup> Luella Harlin, *Organizing a Social Service Exchange* (New York: Community Chests and Councils, Inc., June, 1935).

after clearance from other agencies. The general public, credit departments, attorneys, etc., should not be permitted to use the services and records of the exchange.

#### V. EQUIPMENT AND MANAGEMENT<sup>21</sup>

The office of the exchange should be easily accessible during working hours. The exchange should be equipped to render service within twenty-four hours by telephone, telegraph, or mail, or at least by return-mail service.

The confidential exchange should have the use of a reception room and a separate office in which to set up the files. The file room should be used for no other purpose and should not be open to the general public.

The office equipment should include appropriate office furniture, typewriters,<sup>22</sup> and proper filing cabinets—for name cards and for address cards.

Forms appropriate for the operation of a confidential exchange, including name card, address card, inquiry blank, notification form, etc., have been designed by the Social Service Exchange Committee of Community Chests and Councils. Standard forms may be purchased, or forms designed by the operating agency, containing only the information necessary to effective operation of the clearance service, may be used.

Methods and procedures with respect to indexing, filing, and searching developed on the basis of the experience of established exchanges should be adopted for use by the exchange.

The standard procedures used by established exchanges have been developed out of seventy years of experience. They have been tested and found suitable for clearance purposes. The use of the standard procedures is considered an essential principle of administration for two primary reasons:

First, not only are they adequate for clearance purposes but they are designed to safeguard the limitation of function that is necessary to efficient operation. Registration in the exchange from a carbon copy of a form used for other purposes, such as the application for public assistance or the authorization of public assistance payment, has resulted in a high percentage of error in registration and has placed in the hands of the

<sup>21</sup> *The Social Service Exchange: A Handbook Describing Procedures, Forms, and Equipment Essential to the Operation of a Social Exchange* (New York: Social Service Exchange Committee of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., 1940).

<sup>22</sup> Typewriters with the elite type have been found appropriate to use with standard forms.

exchange information not pertinent to the clearance function but which the exchange may be tempted to use. Data relating to amount of payment or change of status cannot be kept current by the exchange; it is usually misleading when taken out of context, and the handling of data not essential to the function of the exchange adds to the expense and complexity of the job. The reporting on such data by the exchange may result in precipitate and unwarranted action by agencies receiving it and may forestall, rather than promote, interagency conference to the detriment of the persons who have applied for services of participating agencies. Function, as I have indicated, is conditioned by structure and usage, and any form item that is unnecessary for clearance purposes obscures the primary function of prompt and accurate reporting at little cost and presents dangers to efficient and proper administration.

Second, the use of standardized method and terminology is exceedingly important in any activity that involves interagency relationships in order that there will be a complete understanding between the agencies involved. Smooth working relationships are possible only when there is agreement on matters of common concern. Comparison of method or results between exchanges is useful only in terms of similar function and common practice. Interpretation to the public is easier and more effective through terminology in common usage.

An example of the comparison of experiences between exchanges is to be seen in some misunderstanding of the experiences in the West Virginia Central Index. Registration in the West Virginia Index was made from carbon copies of a form prepared for each applicant for services from the public assistance agency. As a result, a large amount of so-called duplication was found to exist. A large number of families were registered as receiving several types of assistance. The general impression was given that there was a tremendous amount of inadvertent duplication of service and assistance uncovered by registration in the exchange. To interpret these figures, however, it is necessary to understand that West Virginia operates an integrated program. One case record is maintained on a household group, and one investigator assumes responsibility for handling applications for general assistance, Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, Aid to Dependent Children, and certification for N.Y.A. and W.P.A. The same investigator thus prepared the forms by which all types of assistance were made available and by which registrations in the Index were effected. Many families had been found to be eligible for several types of service and, with full knowledge of the agency, were receiving these services.

This, according to standard terminology, would not be considered a duplication of service; but, according to the terminology used in West Virginia, they were duplicate registrations. The West Virginia Index is, therefore, an index of multiple services and not an index of case records. This needs to be understood in interpreting the figures on that exchange.

#### VI. COVERAGE

Coverage may be considered from three points of view: by geographical distribution, by agencies within a geographical unit, and by selection of cases to be registered.

A confidential exchange may operate to serve a state, a region within a state, or a local community. It is generally accepted that it is desirable to have clearance service covering natural areas of population, which do not always conform with the boundaries of the political subdivisions. In general, the study preliminary to establishing an exchange would determine the logical and practical geographical coverage to assure appropriate registrations and prompt service.

Participating agencies should include all social agencies maintaining standards of work compatible with those established as a basis for admission and whose records contain data of significance to other social agencies, unless the number of agencies to whom the data are of interest or available is too limited, or unless there are more practical methods of clearance available.

All records of participating agencies which contain data that may be useful to other participating agencies should be registered in the exchange. These records should include records of families or individuals applying for financial assistance or other services where such records contain significant information that can be made available to participating agencies. Registration in the confidential exchange should be complete but selective. Cases, however, in which no significant data are recorded or cases in which the information recorded loses its value over a period of time should be canceled.

The Social Security Board is interested in encouraging the use or administration of well-run confidential exchanges by agencies whose services are based on *social investigation*. The board, however, does not recommend routine registration of individuals known to employment security agencies in the confidential exchange. Neither unemployment compensation agencies nor employment services *require* information such as that obtainable from case records to establish eligibility for their services. Furthermore, recipients of benefits from those agencies have in their posses-

sion the information needed by assistance agencies to establish eligibility for relief or assistance. Therefore, it is believed that the confidential exchange reports are not essential to the employment security agencies and that other social agencies will find the needed information available in the hands of the recipient himself.

#### VII. FINANCE


A plan for financing the confidential exchange should be carefully made before it is established. This plan may provide for different bases of apportioning costs of (a) installation and (b) operation. The plan for financing the exchange should be based on an annual budget and should provide for periodic payment by all participating agencies of a portion of the cost based on the recommendation of the advisory board and accepted by the agencies. The method of finance should assure adequate and continuous services and freedom from domination by any one of the participating agencies.

The confidential exchange should be equipped with appropriate service to maintain a sound cost-accounting system.

To repeat points that have been previously made on the subject of finance, it is believed that an adequate financial plan to assure continuity of service and to protect the functions of the exchange must be prepared by the advisory board of each exchange and ratified by the participating agencies. It is obvious that the cost of installation of an exchange may be borne to a large extent by the public agencies in the community, but it seems axiomatic that any agency participating in the exchange should be willing to bear a reasonable portion of the cost of operation. Experimental ventures in state-wide clearance indicate that unsound methods of finance that permitted domination of the exchange by one participating agency or failed to provide for adequate and continuous service have contributed substantially to the problems of efficient operation and, eventually, to the closing of the exchange before its value had received a fair test. An annual budget providing for regular payments by each participating agency of amounts agreed upon as representing a reasonable charge for the volume of service rendered the agency over the budget period has been found satisfactory both to exchanges and to participating agencies. A plan for financing the exchange must be established in advance if the exchange is to be staffed and equipped to meet requests for service. A pro rata basis of payment places an artificial emphasis on the individual cost per case, which tends to restrict the use of the exchange and permits fluctuations in income which impair continuity of service and efficient operation.


## VIII. CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF RECORDS

The organization, methods of operation, and practices of the confidential exchange must all be designed and managed to protect the principles of the confidential nature of the relationship between an applicant for social services and the agency to which he applies. To this end the confidential exchange has a special obligation to maintain a high standard of ethical and efficient performance of its staff, to include in membership only agencies respecting this principle, to maintain in its files only such information as is necessary to perform the clearance function, and to disclose that information only to participating agencies that are committed to use the information for social services to those applying or referred for such services.



## CHAPTER XIII

### LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR JOINT FINANCING AND FOR JOINT PLANNING



IN MOST cities the two organizations most widely recognized as channels through which community organization is effected are (1) the community chest and (2) the council of social agencies. Although there are important differences in the structure and functions of these two organizations, it is nevertheless difficult to discuss them separately. In many cities they are not actually separate organizations but are organically united under a common management. Even where each agency has an independent status, practical necessity requires that close relationships be established between them. Since in actual practice the operations of the two agencies are so closely interrelated, it seems more realistic to attempt in this chapter to introduce them as associated enterprises.

The primary function of a community chest is to raise the money required to meet the budgetary deficits of the member-agencies.<sup>1</sup> Usually this is accomplished in a single annual fund-raising campaign. The primary function of a council of social agencies is to co-ordinate the service functions of the social agencies and the social-planning activities of the community and to provide leadership in the development of the community's social services. Since the granting of funds cannot be accomplished intelligently without social objectives in view, the chest is greatly concerned to keep abreast of plans made by the council. In some places where councils are inactive or ineffective, the chest may even undertake some of the planning and co-ordinating functions independently. Since

<sup>1</sup> The joint financing organizations in New York City and in Chicago differ in this and in other respects from those in other cities. The nation's two largest cities were among the last to adopt joint financing. In both places experience is still too brief to indicate whether the plans adopted will prove permanently successful. Neither city attempts to supply the total budgetary deficits of the member-agencies. Hence the joint fund-raising effort adds one more campaign to the city's previous total, although agreements between the central fund and the agencies as to the groups each will solicit tend to reduce "multiple solicitation" (see Wayne McMillen, "Joint Financing of Private Social Work in Chicago," *Social Service Review*, XI [March, 1937], 33-51).



plans for the development of social services are unrealistic unless evolved with the problem of financing clearly in mind, councils are greatly concerned to understand the policies and the existing commitments of chests. In brief, neither the chest nor the council can operate with maximum effectiveness unless their activities are very closely co-ordinated.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A backward look suggests that the development of the chest and council movement in social work was inevitable. In the final analysis both spring from the widespread and growing dissatisfaction with public social work in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The American Poor Law, like its English prototype, was fundamentally deterrent in purpose and method. One of its major aims was to make relief unpalatable. The American conscience could not permanently tolerate this situation. Sooner or later most people learned about worthy citizens who were reduced to penury as a result of some one of the ordinary mishaps of life. It was repugnant to their sense of justice that a series of undeserved and unavoidable misfortunes should force these individuals "to go on the county." Some kind of informal, private relief seemed infinitely preferable. Hence, instead of insisting upon improved legislation and more constructive administration, various groups of private individuals adopted the alternative of organizing private societies to meet the needs of people who would otherwise have been obliged to seek pauper relief. In cities the number of these agencies multiplied rapidly. Presently a considerable number of organizations was in operation, each of them seeking funds from substantially the same constituency and each driving ahead independently in an effort to meet pressing social needs. The Charity Organization Society movement, which had recognized this problem and had attempted to deal with it, had gradually come to believe that its major effort should be devoted to the development of family case work. Hence there was no specific medium, either for co-ordinating the fund-raising activities of the agencies or for bringing their service and planning programs into harmony with one another. Yet many of those who were connected with social agencies had become acutely aware of the spotty character of the program. They saw that excellent work was done here and there by individual agencies and institutions but that there was nothing that could be called a genuine community program. There was a need to pool the devoted effort spent on the support and the improvement of particular programs and to transform it into a broad concern for the problems of the entire community. Naturally, those who sensed most acutely the need for greater co-ordi-

nation and for increasing integration of activity were the employees of social agencies and the laymen actively identified with the direction of social work programs. But there were others also who recognized that there was need for improved organization. Prominent among these were the donors, particularly those whose economic or social position in the community marked them as natural targets whenever a campaign for charitable purposes was set afoot. Every mail, it seemed, brought an appeal for funds. And personal calls from those campaigning for specific agencies seemed to come with increasing frequency. This "multiple solicitation," as it was called, proved to be very confusing to lay donors. They could not understand how there could be, in their prosperous community, a need for so many charitable organizations, many of which seemed to be engaged in substantially the same kinds of work. Some of them came to be suspicious of all social work. They believed that somehow there must be racketeering in a field that so constantly "worked the street." Some began to look upon their contributions as an annoying tax which they must pay in order not to offend the prominent individuals back of the various agencies. A few began to rebel; and a good many were aware that something had to be done to bring order out of chaos.

Multiple solicitation also had bad effects on the social agencies themselves. In some places competition among the agencies developed, since it was clear that only about so much money would be given each year to charity and it behooved each agency to do its best to get its share. Nor was the competition limited to the field of fund-raising. Inquiries launched in some communities suggested that competition for clients also developed. Since the agency with the largest load to carry could presumably make the most effective appeal for support, there was a practical reason for adopting a liberal, or even a competitive, intake policy. Competition for clients, however, was always the exception rather than the rule. Inflated case loads were much more commonly a result of unwise intake policies and the continuation of care—especially in institutions—after the need had passed. Thus the amount sought by an agency often bore little or no relationship to the value of its service or to the wisdom of its program. The organization with a skilful fund-raiser was likely to do well in its campaign, even though its program was mediocre or poor. Agencies with poor direction in their money-raising efforts might, on the other hand, be forced to operate at starvation levels even though their work was excellent in quality and their program of basic importance in the community. New agencies were likely to be seriously handicapped also. The older organizations, with established lists of supporters, might be able to raise

their budgets with comparative ease and with minimum expense—for example, 15 per cent or less of the total amount contributed.<sup>2</sup> But new organizations, no matter how important their program, might be forced to spend 50 per cent or more of their collections on the fund-raising campaign. Any such case that came to public attention naturally brought unfavorable repercussions upon all fund-raising efforts. Many of the agencies were aware of these problems and desired, no less ardently than the donors, to arrive at some kind of constructive solution.

The great increase in giving during the war period of 1914-18 gave the final impetus to the demand for improved co-ordination in the charitable field. Just before the outbreak of the war Cleveland had organized, in 1913, a Federation of Charities and Philanthropy. This is usually regarded as the first community chest.<sup>3</sup> The Cleveland experiment was not widely copied, however, until the wartime emergency focused attention upon the need for improved organization. During and immediately after the war period a number of cities organized war chests. The basic purpose of these war chests was to raise in one drive the sums needed to meet the quotas assigned to the city by the various war charities, such as the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., the Knights of Columbus, and others. The war-chest organization also enabled these cities to deal with the headquarters of the various national war charities in a business-like way and to arrive at quotas that were adjusted to local fund-raising capacities. In some places the war chest included the local, permanent charities, and in other places it did not. Some of the war chests had a continuous existence and, with the coming of peace, were transformed into community chests. In other places federated financing ended with the dissolution of the war chest, and there was a lapse of years before a community chest was organized to finance the permanent charitable agencies of the community. A council of social agencies was organized in Milwaukee in 1909, which is usually recognized as the first council in the United States.<sup>4</sup> The move-

<sup>2</sup> "Numerous surveys establish that the average cost of raising money among unfederated societies is about 15 per cent" (William J. Norton, "Social Work Grows Up," *Survey Graphic*, LIX, No. 3 [November, 1927], 136.)

<sup>3</sup> A plan of federated financing had been in existence in Denver since 1887, but the early Denver organization lacked some of the attributes of a modern community chest (see Guy T. Justis, *Twenty-five Years of Social Welfare [1917-1942]* [1943], pp. 15-19).

<sup>4</sup> *Yesterday and Today with Community Chests* (Community Chests and Councils, Inc., 1937), p. 10. Whether the Milwaukee council was actually the first council is debatable. Certainly, there was an earlier organization in Pittsburgh made up of delegates from various charitable, religious, and social agencies. This organization sought to promote co-operation among the individual societies and "to pass upon questions affecting the general welfare of the poor and the charitable activities of the city" (quoted from a survey made in Pittsburgh in 1908 by Francis H. McLean). Although in structure and function the Pittsburgh organization

ment spread slowly, however, until federated financing brought into sharp relief the need for closer working relationships among the agencies. The great growth of councils occurred, therefore, in the period following 1920.

Donors are usually credited with having started community chests. In fact, the statement has often been made that chests began as "a big givers' protective movement." However that may be, it is also true that a good many agencies recognized the need for a more orderly method of supporting private social work and welcomed the spread of the chest movement. The council movement, on the other hand, was initially inspired by social workers and laymen actively identified with the direction of social agency programs. The typical donor did not at the outset recognize the potentialities of the council movement. Later, after many donors had served on chest committees, some of them became enthusiastic proponents of the council; for their experiences had made clear the need for a formal channel for effecting improvements in the total program of community social services.

#### FUNCTIONS OF COUNCILS OF SOCIAL AGENCIES

The purposes of councils have been variously defined. An examination of the bylaws and annual reports of a representative group of them suggests, however, that the following functions are common to a great majority of them: (1) development of interagency co-operative activities; (2) raising of standards; (3) joint action on community social problems; (4) co-ordination of services; (5) development of community leadership in social planning and promotion. In an effort to discharge these obligations more effectively, many councils maintain specialized technical services. Those most commonly found are (1) a bureau of statistics and research and (2) a department of public information. These specialized services, however, are ancillary to the other activities. Their purpose is to support and strengthen the specific programs upon which the council embarks.

#### I. DEVELOPMENT OF CO-OPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

Co-operative ventures may be undertaken by all agencies in the council or by smaller groups with common concerns, such, for example, as the

would seem to be a genuine council of social agencies, it was also actually an organic part of a private functional agency, then called the Associated Charities. Thus, whether Pittsburgh or Milwaukee should be credited with the first council is a question of definition. Some of those associated with the organization of the Milwaukee council have said that they studied the Pittsburgh organization before launching their own agency and that they regard Pittsburgh as the home of the first council of social agencies. For an account of a much earlier organization in Boston (1843) that resembled modern councils in structure and purpose see Mary Bosworth Treudley, "An Early Council of Social Agencies," *Social Service Review*, XIII, No. 1 (March, 1939), 93-104.

child welfare agencies or the social settlements. Likewise, these joint efforts may be either formal or informal in character. The problem of the chronic sick is one which affects the work of many agencies, including hospitals, clinics, departments of medical social service, family welfare societies, nursing agencies, and others. In New York City the council was the organization which investigated this problem. At the conclusion of the study, there was available to each agency and to the community a picture of the extent of the need and of the facilities available to meet it. The council was able in this way to provide a basis for future planning. Because the council represents all types of agencies, its findings carried weight. An equally careful and objective study made by one of the member-agencies could scarcely have commanded the same degree of attention. The joint character of the undertaking was, therefore, in itself a substantial asset.

Joint consideration of common problems is by no means always achieved through launching a formal study. In fact, most of the activity in this area is carried on informally in meetings and through discussion groups. It may suddenly develop, for example, that funds made available for the public home relief program will be exhausted six weeks before the end of the fiscal year. The work of a great many agencies, both public and private, will be affected by this catastrophe. The council provides a means by which these agencies may be quickly summoned into conference to determine what action may be taken, individually or jointly, to tide the community over the six weeks' emergency period. Perhaps the conference will result in a decision to take some kind of joint action. For example, the group might appoint a committee to urge the responsible officials to borrow funds or to arrange in other ways to meet their statutory obligations. Or the conferees might agree upon some revision of existing intake policies such that some aid and service would be available to the stranded clients of the public home relief agency until new funds became available. In brief, in any social welfare situation, either of an emergency or of a routine nature, the council is the responsible body that is ordinarily expected to call the agencies into consultation to determine whether action should be taken and, if so, to outline a specific plan of action.

Co-operative operations may sometimes relate to problems of social treatment or to administrative matters. The social service exchange, for example, is in many communities a department of the council. A few councils operate joint intake or joint case work services for certain groups of member-agencies. For example, a great many homes for the aged find that the rate of turnover of their populations is very low. Perhaps only one

or two changes occur in an average month. Such institutions do not feel justified in retaining a case worker on a full-time basis to investigate their applications and to attend to the limited number of case work problems that arise in the institution. If several institutions in the city are similarly situated, it may be possible for the council to establish a case work service that will serve all of them. The costs may then be apportioned among the participating institutions on the basis of payment for the service rendered. In some cities joint housing of all noninstitutional agencies has been promoted by the council. Where this arrangement is effected, most of the agencies occupy offices in the same building, and opportunities for consultation and co-operation are thereby greatly increased. Joint purchasing has been attempted in some places, but it appears not to have been a conspicuous success.<sup>5</sup> Joint information and complaint bureaus have been established by some councils. The function of these bureaus is to relieve the agencies of the necessity of dealing with requests for information and with complaints, such as, for example, the charge that certain individuals are in need and can find no organization that will do anything for them. In one city the council worked out a joint summer recreation program to serve the clients of five agencies. The participating agencies handled the service end of the program, but the council made the venture possible by assuming responsibility for the administrative details. Thus councils have stimulated agencies to work co-operatively, both at the treatment level and at the administrative level and have, in addition, provided services that assist them in subjecting some of their common problems to joint analysis.

## 2. RAISING OF STANDARDS

In theory all persons in need of assistance have equal claim upon the resources of the community. In actual practice, however, there are great disparities in the amount and quality of service received by individuals with similar needs and with identical claims upon local resources. A major reason for this situation is that wide variations exist in the standards of the local agencies. Since a primary objective in community organization is to eliminate these disparities, the council of social agencies must inevitably devote considerable attention to the problem of standards. Naturally, the efforts of the council are directed toward improving the work of the agencies with low standards. There is never a desire to establish equal-

<sup>5</sup> It would seem that the council could purchase in quantities for a group of agencies more economically than each agency could purchase for itself. However, certain studies that have been made suggest that this is by no means always true, especially if, for some reason, some of the consumers insist upon certain brands or certain qualities that are not acceptable to others in the group.

ty of service by leveling down the best programs to some theoretical average that can be attained by all. Councils also study the standards that have been set by national organizations and, if these national standards seem reasonable and desirable, endeavor to promote their adoption locally.

In seeking to influence standards, the council makes use of various methods. One obvious method is to establish criteria for council membership. Agencies with low standards will then be obliged to institute improvements if they wish to affiliate with the council. Obviously, there are limits to what can be accomplished in this way, since, in general, the council can set forth only broad general standards.

In most of the larger councils the agencies are grouped together on a functional basis into subcouncils or divisions. The divisions commonly found in councils are (1) family welfare, (2) child welfare, (3) health, and (4) recreation and informal education. There are, of course, many variations from this alignment. In some cities, for example, four divisions have seemed insufficient, and additional subcouncils have been formed, such as those concerned with day nurseries, care of the aged, etc. Elsewhere there has been some experimentation with more inclusive forms of subcouncils, such as subcouncils on case work and on group work. Whatever the alignment may be,<sup>6</sup> the bringing-together of agencies operating in the same specific field affords increased opportunity for influencing standards. Often these subcouncils institute self-study projects. Their meetings relate to their common problems. Through committees, they formulate standards relating to various aspects of their work. Since these standards are discussed by the entire division, considerable self-education results, and in many cases the participating organizations adopt the improvements outlined. In fact, they may often be more receptive to suggestions received in this way than to the recommendations of a more formal study.

Nevertheless, the formal study is another of the methods which the council uses in its effort to raise standards. Formal studies may relate only to one particular field, such as health, or they may undertake to examine all fields included in the council, often with special emphasis upon the problem of interrelationships among them. Formal studies frequently terminate in the organization of some kind of committee to follow up on the recommendations. This committee usually is given responsibility for carrying on negotiations with the agencies in an effort to accomplish the desired changes. Often it is called a "follow-up committee" or a "realignment committee," and it ordinarily includes representatives of each field

<sup>6</sup> For a picture of the structure of a council and an account of typical activities of a council, see Doc. 13-M, pp. 509-12.

that was included in the study. An alternative procedure is to hold a single, representative committee responsible for the preparation, conduct, and follow-up of the study. But, whatever the committee arrangement may be, a formal study always has distinctive educational implications and provides an additional means of influencing the standards of agencies.

Scores of specific illustrations of the standard-raising activities of councils might be cited. In one city, for example, the council was responsible for organizing and launching an extensive study of the methods and programs of group work agencies. This was a self-study project in which the agencies, through frequent consultation, arrived at criteria which each could then apply to its own situation. Several councils have devoted considerable attention to the development of standard relief budgets. These studies take into account variations in the composition of families, dietary principles, housing standards, recreational needs, and similar matters. In such studies the hope is that all local agencies administering relief will adopt a budget at least as high as the minimum recommended in the council study. Some of these studies have been widely circulated and have influenced standards in other communities. A number of councils have also given attention to problems of personnel administration. The quality of the service received by clients is obviously determined in large measure by the caliber of the personnel employed in the agencies. The quality of personnel and the rapidity of turnover in personnel are likewise influenced by salary scales and employment practices. Hence it is important for the council to establish standards in these areas. In one city an effort was made to classify all social work positions in the city and to recommend salary brackets for each position. Conditions of employment, such as vacation policies, practices with respect to sick leave, educational leave, etc., have also been carefully studied by some councils, and efforts have been made to promote uniform policies among the agencies with respect to them. In fact, councils have undertaken standard-raising activities in almost every field of social work. These efforts have related in some instances to program and social treatment and, in other cases, to various aspects of administration, including personnel standards and employment practices.

### 3. JOINT ACTION

Joint action initiated by councils of social agencies relates usually either to matters of public administration or to social legislation. During the 1930's, relief crises were of frequent occurrence in many cities. Some councils attempted to avert or to mitigate these crises by issuing protests



or by offering plans and counterproposals to responsible officials of government. Sometimes the council arranged for a loan of personnel from the private agencies to help the public relief bureau through a strenuous period; or it assisted the public department by recruiting personnel to formulate and conduct examinations for the selection of employees on a merit basis. In many places councils attempted to persuade the administrators of public relief agencies to improve relief standards and to adopt suitable qualifications in the employment of personnel.

The activities in the field of social legislation have likewise covered a wide range. At one end of the scale are the councils which have found it difficult to take an aggressive stand relative to specific bills. Sometimes the member-agencies of the council were not in complete agreement, and the council was accordingly not in a position to speak for a united front; or, in the case of councils supported chiefly by the chest, the governing board might be unwilling to take a position in favor of a bill to which the chest was opposed. Although in some places, such as Los Angeles, it appears to be an accepted policy that the council should be responsible for promoting sound social legislation, perhaps it is not an unfair generalization to say that councils in most communities have found themselves obliged to adopt a conservative policy in promoting or opposing specific legislative measures. As Documents 13-A and 13-B suggest,<sup>7</sup> however, the trend in recent years seems to have been in the direction of recognizing the desirability of wider participation by councils and their affiliates in this type of activity.

At the other end of the scale are the councils which have for many years engaged in legislative activity. Sometimes they send letters or petitions directly to their representatives in Congress or in the state legislature; occasionally they may seek an opportunity to present evidence before a committee of the legislature; or they may even appoint a delegation to wait upon certain legislators in the interest of promoting or opposing a pending bill. Very often, instead of taking the initiative, the council may lend a hand to some other organization that is interested in a particular piece of social legislation. If the League of Women Voters or the American Legion or some similar organization is sponsoring a child welfare bill or an improved home relief measure, the council is often willing to give public endorsement to their efforts. In one city the council of social agencies memorialized the legislature during each of several consecutive sessions in behalf of a measure to regulate small-loan companies. Ultimately its efforts met with success. In another city the council submitted a concrete

<sup>7</sup> See below, pp. 476-83.

proposal for the establishment of a county bureau of public welfare and, after a very active campaign in behalf of the proposal, was rewarded by seeing it adopted. Another council took the initiative in organizing a representative committee to work out and submit to the legislature a plan for complete reorganization of the state department of welfare. Thus, where councils have concerned themselves with social legislation, the record suggests that they have been able to register some successes.

#### 4. CO-ORDINATION OF SERVICES

Social welfare services in most communities are administered by a considerable number of agencies that are administratively independent of one another. Some of these agencies operate in the same functional field. The council provides a channel through which their common problems may be discussed. Sometimes it may be possible for the interested agencies to develop by this means improved arrangements for co-ordinating their activities. For example, a specific methodology may be worked out for exchange of reports on families known to more than one of the agencies in the group. Or agreements may be reached relative to intake policies and to division of the field, with a resulting reduction in the number of cases that must be referred or transferred from one agency to another. Agreements of this type are also of great importance among agencies operating in different functional fields. Family welfare and recreation agencies usually do not operate health programs. They often encounter cases, however, in which a health problem apparently exists. Their own plans for the client cannot readily be perfected unless a co-operative arrangement insures proper reference of the case to a medical agency and continuing clearance of information as to the progress of treatment. Here, as elsewhere throughout the field of social work, the operations of one agency must be constructively related to the operations of other agencies. The entire pattern is like a jigsaw puzzle in which the various pieces must be fitted together if a meaningful picture is to emerge.

Changes in agency programs may occasion serious dislocations in the community's social welfare provisions unless advance consideration is given to alternative arrangements. Sometimes agencies experience unexpected shrinkages in income that may necessitate curtailment of service. Or they may decide for other reasons to alter their programs by instituting a new service or by curtailing an old one. From the point of view of the community any contemplated changes of this character must be carefully examined to determine what their effect will be upon the provisions available to clients. New services may result in duplication or in

overlapping of programs. Curtailments may deprive clients of services for which a substantial need still exists. The council provides a medium through which such questions may be examined before action is taken. If an alteration in the program of one agency appears to be necessary or advisable, it may be possible for other local agencies to institute changes in their services such that no deficiencies in the total program ensue. In this connection it is important to remember that most agencies have a traditional program which they have inherited from preceding boards and staffs. There is always a danger that these programs may be continued unchanged even after new developments in the community have rendered much of the work unnecessary or obsolete. A major function of the council is to bring all programs into line with one another. This calls for constant study and consultation. Improved coverage of need can be insured, under existing arrangements, only by constant efforts to co-ordinate the functions of the numerous operating units in each field and to relate them constructively to the services available in other functional fields.

#### 5. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The social-planning activities of councils have been characterized by steady growth and, in the main, by consistent improvement. Most of the large councils now have research departments. These departments have gradually amassed a reservoir of social data that provides a basis for studying and analyzing the developments in the social welfare services of the community. In addition, most of them have conducted many special studies. *No Money for Rent* is the title of a study<sup>1</sup> made by one council in an effort to determine what happened to relief families when the rent allowance was suddenly discontinued. This study is typical of the short-time investigations frequently launched by councils to supplement the data they amass routinely. This combination of "background data" and material immediately pertinent to a specific problem has proved to be essential if planning groups are to be provided with an adequate factual basis for their work. Although the smaller councils usually are unable to support a full-fledged research department, most of them are very active in collecting basic social data. The resulting material can be used in social planning and is a very valuable asset when the council brings in outside specialists to conduct surveys.

The collection of data is not, of course, the social-planning process. It is, however, essential to the process unless social planners are to be guided

<sup>1</sup> Ewan Clague, *No Money for Rent* (Joint Committee on Research of the Community Council of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, 1933).

in their deliberations chiefly by intuition. Planning, as it is now practiced in councils, is carried on mainly in committees. These committees are supplied with all the pertinent data which the council can collect. Sometimes the employed staff of the council may, in addition, submit for consideration and criticism by the planning committee the outlines of plans they themselves have developed. Through advance study of this material each member of the committee is expected to arrive at tentative conclusions. These conclusions are then thrashed out in a meeting or series of meetings of the entire group, and an effort is made to arrive at a solution which all members can conscientiously support. Planning committees seldom have the power to put their plans into effect. Such plans usually have to be submitted to governing bodies for approval and adoption. Frequently these bodies are unwilling to adopt a recommended plan unless it is substantially altered. Nevertheless, in spite of the many hazards any plan must encounter, it is a great step forward in any community to have a medium through which social planning is carried on. Even though a considerable number of the plans miscarry, some benefits inevitably accrue to the community. Perhaps more effective methods of social planning will be developed as time goes on, but in the meantime each community needs to develop the tradition of planned, as opposed to haphazard, development of its social services.

Social work has always suffered from being misunderstood, partly because of the large number of different administrative units operating in the field. Because the administrative and policy-making units are so numerous, the agencies are obliged to work out rather complicated intake policies, to develop co-ordinating devices, and to effect a detailed division of the field. All this often proves very confusing to the layman. And, since it is difficult to support enthusiastically a program that one does not understand, social work has been deprived of the support and participation of many laymen who have altruistic impulses and a genuine desire to serve their communities. Social agencies have long been aware of this problem and have made persistent efforts to solve it. Originally, each agency was obliged to carry on its program of interpretation independently. The rise of the chest and the council provided a new medium through which these efforts could be either co-ordinated or pooled. As a result, emphasis has been slowly shifting from the accomplishments of individual agencies to the social needs of the community.

Communities differ widely in the way in which their programs of social work interpretation are organized. Some have a central bureau that is supposed to interpret the work of the various individual agencies and, in

addition, to promote understanding of social problems and of the total social work program in the community. In some cases this bureau is a department of the chest and in other cases it operates under the council. Or, again, there may be two central publicity departments working co-operatively, but with different emphases—one under the chest and the other under the council. Some of the member-agencies, especially in the larger cities, may, in addition, maintain publicity departments of their own.

There is a tendency in most communities for the program of interpretation to center around the fund-raising efforts. Although year-round programs may be maintained, the volume of material increases at campaign time and is likely to have as its objective the stimulating of contributions in the annual drive. This means that disproportionate emphasis is given to the programs of the private agencies. Since these publicity bureaus are supported by the private field, this emphasis is not surprising. Public agencies, if they engage in public relations work at all, usually are concerned to interpret their own activities only. They find it difficult, legally, to contribute funds for the support of a community-wide public relations bureau.

Councils have, nevertheless, been able to register some important accomplishments in interpretation. This has been true even in cities in which funds do not permit the employment of a public relations director. Councils have also been able to do some effective interpretation independently, even in cities in which the publicity bureau is directed by the chest. A surprising number of councils now publish and distribute monthly or quarterly bulletins or news letters. These publications tend to be mainly factual in character. Some of them contain research material only. Almost all of them are genuinely community-wide in scope. Usually they present statistics relating to some particular problem or to specific fields of service. For example, tables may be presented showing the trend in free care at local hospitals, both public and private, or a line graph may be used to indicate fluctuations in the home relief case load for the entire community. Most observers believe that the constant impact of these factual materials has raised the level of understanding of social programs in the community. Moreover, the approach has tended to focus attention upon the total social work program rather than upon the activities of individual agencies. Councils have also issued other publications, such as the special studies conducted under council auspices, that have contributed to an understanding of social work. The directory of social agencies also, which lists and describes briefly the programs of all local agencies, has served a useful purpose. Although intended to serve primarily as a reference book for the

use of social agencies, the directory has had a surprisingly large circulation in some communities and has undoubtedly helped to familiarize local citizens with the social work structure of the community. Thus, though a great many councils have not been satisfied with their accomplishments in promoting an understanding of social work in the community, the evidence suggests that the principle of a unified approach has been sound and that accomplishments have been more significant than could have been achieved under the old individualistic system.

The basic purposes of the council, as outlined in the foregoing discussion, are broad in scope and difficult to accomplish. Moreover, the council has little or no power to enforce its decisions. It must rely mainly upon education and persuasion, which means that progress sometimes seems exceedingly slow. On the other hand, progress that springs from genuine conviction is likely to persist. Changes that are accepted unwillingly often do not last long. If the council method of advance is sound, it would seem that the tempo of accomplishment should be accelerated, not by developing coercive methods, but rather by improving the existing approach. This may involve, as will be suggested later,<sup>9</sup> fundamental changes in authorization and structure, as well as a strengthening of methodology.

Although troubles sometimes develop between chests and councils, there is, in theory, no fundamental conflict in their objectives. The chest is responsible for financing the work of its member-agencies. It is therefore concerned that this work be done economically, efficiently, and with constructive results. This means that the chest is no less eager than the council that social planning, co-ordination of services, and raising of standards be carried forward in an orderly manner. In fact, in many communities, the chest directs these activities, either because there is no council or because the council is ineffective. Therefore, where both council and chest are active, conflicts that develop result, not from any essential clash in function, but rather from differences in interpretation of objectives, or from doubts which each may entertain concerning the competence or integrity of purpose of the other. The council may charge the chest, for example, with attempting to hold down the budgets of the agencies to as low a figure as possible. The interpretation here is that the chest has adopted as one of its objectives the protection of the donors. On the other hand, the chest may charge the council with unrealistic and utopian planning that offends and alienates important supporters of the social work program. The chest therefore interprets its action in refusing budgetary increases, not as an effort to protect donors, but rather as an attempt to

<sup>9</sup> See below, pp. 461-62.

prevent the development of unsound programs that may undermine existing sources of support. Various efforts have been made to correct this source of conflict, and various plans have been proposed but not tried. Some of these devices will be discussed in a later section of this chapter.<sup>10</sup>

#### COERCIVE POWERS INHERENT IN JOINT FINANCING

Unlike the council, the chest possesses coercive powers. This can perhaps be best illustrated by citing a hypothetical case. Let us assume, for example, that a certain agency has been operating on a budget of \$50,000 per year. It has gradually built up a constituency and therefore is able to raise its budget each year with comparative ease. Then it decides to affiliate with the local community chest. The chest agrees to meet its budgetary needs and explains that the agency must follow the usual procedure by submitting a request for funds each year to be passed upon by the budget committee of the chest. In addition, the agency must agree not to solicit funds independently and must make its list of donors available to the campaign committee of the chest. The agency accepts these requirements because it wishes to be free from the responsibility of money-raising and hopes to devote its full energies to the development of its program. This arrangement works satisfactorily for five or six years. Then a difference of opinion arises between the agency and the chest. For example, the chest may request the agency to abandon some part of its program. Perhaps this suggestion is a good one. Perhaps new services have been created which make alterations in the agency's program desirable. But the agency does not wish to make the suggested changes and, in the end, refuses to do so. At this point, the chest is in a position to exercise coercion if it chooses. It can trim the budget of the agency so that the program must be curtailed, or it can refuse to make an allocation until the recommended changes in program are made. The agency then faces two alternatives. It may withdraw from the chest and resume responsibility for financing its own program. This has now become a grim prospect, however. For five years the agency has not solicited funds, and it has long since lost touch with its former constituency. This means that it would have to start from scratch and build up an entire new list of supporters. Most agencies know from experience what a difficult task that would be. Accordingly, in most instances, the agency would doubtless adopt the other alternative and accede to the demands of the chest.

The illustration given above represents an extreme case. Probably com-

<sup>10</sup> See below, pp. 455-57.

paratively few overt conflicts of this type have arisen. Moreover, agencies are not without defensive weapons in case of encroachments by the chest. Their own boards of directors often are supporters of the chest and have influence with the budget committee and with the governing body of the chest. In fact, agency board members can, on occasion, exercise this influence destructively. A certain board member who makes a large annual contribution to the chest may attempt to gain unwarranted favors for the agency in which he is interested by threatening to discontinue his support of the chest unless the favor is granted. Thus there is the possibility that pressure may be exerted in the one direction as well as in the other. In actual situations, however, pressure is more likely to be indirect than overt. Agencies commonly do not wait for the chest to bring pressure upon them. The fear that pressure might be applied is often enough to induce the agency to act. Similarly, if an important donor manifested concern about an agency, the chest would doubtless try to meet his wishes as far as possible without waiting for the matter to become an unpleasant issue. Agencies that receive national publicity, such as the Red Cross, commonly find it easier to withdraw from the chest in case differences arise than do agencies that are purely local in character, the reason being that nationally known agencies can usually build up a new list of supporters more quickly and more easily than agencies that are obliged to depend wholly on local publicity efforts.

The record shows that a considerable number of agencies have withdrawn from chests following a period of participation. In 96 cities, 654 agencies dropped out of chests in the period 1929-39.<sup>11</sup> These withdrawals were prompted by a variety of causes, and there is no reason to believe that coercion or attempted coercion on the part of the chest was responsible for any large proportion of them. In fact, many are known to have withdrawn because increased endowment or increased income from other sources, such as earnings, made it possible for them to relinquish chest support. Others have withdrawn because their national headquarters wished them to do so or because they believed their income would be increased and their local following would be augmented by an independent fund-raising campaign. The figures do suggest, however, that the coercive power of the chest is much less potent than agencies originally feared it might be. Evidence from various sources suggests that many agencies have found that they are not obliged to remain in the chest in order to survive and that a number of them have not hesitated to strike out on an independent basis.

<sup>11</sup> Ralph Blanchard, "Community Chests," *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, p. 126.



## THE ANNUAL JOINT DRIVE FOR FUNDS

The spectacular feature of the chest program is the annual campaign for funds. The solicitation is carried on by a great army of volunteers organized on a quasi-military basis. Usually some prominent local citizen is appointed chairman. He, in turn, selects subordinates to be responsible for various specific tasks. He may appoint, for example, a "larger gifts committee," a geographical organization, an industrial division, etc. Under these subordinate volunteer units, large numbers of teams are organized, each headed by a team captain. The actual task of soliciting prospects is in the hands of workers on these teams, often canvassing in pairs. They do not call on prospects indiscriminately, nor do they merely ask for a gift. They are usually given a definite list of "prospects," whose names are listed on cards, each card indicating the amount the prospect may reasonably be expected to give. In calling upon a prospect, the solicitors are expected to try to get the amount indicated on the card. These cards have been carefully prepared in advance, usually with the advice of a special rating committee composed of persons familiar with the economic status of corporations and individuals in the community. The assignment of specific cards to each team insures reasonably complete coverage and precludes multiple solicitation of some prospects and complete omission of others.

In most cities an effort is made to complete the campaign for funds within a period of ten days or two weeks. Some communities—particularly the large ones—may find it impossible to finish the task in so short a time. In a few places active solicitation of prospects continues for as long as two months or more. The campaign committee usually makes use of a variety of publicity devices to focus the attention of the community upon the drive. A conspicuous signboard may be erected at some central point in the city, and on this board the mounting total of the contributions is indicated each day. Daily meetings of the volunteer solicitors are held—usually at the lunch hour. At these meetings each team captain reports his progress to date. Competition among the teams is stimulated, and each seeks to be the first to "go over the top" with its quota. The campaign ends with a "victory dinner" or with a similar type of meeting, at which final reports are given on the results achieved.

In recent years added impetus has been given to community-chest drives through synchronization of the campaigns. The national association, Community Chests and Councils, Inc., organizes each year a national committee, composed of nationally prominent individuals to promote the chest campaigns. This committee, which sponsors conferences

and other activities to stimulate giving, is known as the "Mobilization for Human Needs."<sup>22</sup> The focusing of attention upon the chest drives in this way produces a considerable volume of publicity in newspapers, magazines, and over the air. Local chests, by holding their drives during the period of this "mobilization," benefit by this publicity. Although some chests still conduct their solicitations at other times of the year, a majority now hold them in the autumn during the period of the national "mobilization."

The work of the "larger gifts committee" is of special importance in a community fund drive. This committee is ordinarily made up of persons whose economic and social position in the community gives them easy

TABLE 1\*

CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY CHESTS IN 1942 DISTRIBUTED BY PERCENTAGES RAISED IN SIX GIVING BRACKETS

GIVING BRACKETS	PER CENT OF TOTAL CONTRIBUTED		GIVING BRACKETS	PER CENT OF TOTAL CONTRIBUTED	
	In Each Bracket	Cumulated		In Each Bracket	Cumulated
Over \$5,000.....	16	16	\$25-\$99.....	11	67
\$1,000-\$4,999....	16	32	\$ 5-\$24.....	18	85
\$ 100-\$ 999....	24	56	Under \$5.....	15	100

\* Data taken from C. M. Bookman, "Community Chests and War Chests," *Social Work Year Book*, 1943, pp. 132-33.

access to the individuals from whom large donations may logically be expected. The assignment of the committee is to solicit these "big givers." Usually the work of the larger gifts committee is well under way, or even completed, before the community-wide campaign is launched. Then, during the course of the campaign, some of these large gifts are reported at each of the daily meetings of the solicitors. Psychologically, this system has proved to be effective; for the announcement of these large gifts encourages the solicitors to feel that the total goal is attainable.

The data in Table 1 indicate the scope of the task intrusted to the larger gifts committee (sometimes called "special gifts" or "sponsors' committee"). For the country as a whole, more than half of all money raised by chests is contributed by donors who give \$100 or more. These percentages

<sup>22</sup> This national mobilization was suspended following the outbreak of World War II. Local chests expanded into war chests and therefore turned for guidance and leadership to the National War Fund. Presumably, some kind of national mobilization will be resumed when the local chests are restored to their peacetime functions.

vary from place to place: in the large cities, about 60 per cent of the total raised is contributed by those who give at least \$100; in small chests this proportion usually drops to about 33 per cent.

The industrial division (sometimes called the "business division") usually has the responsibility of organizing the solicitation in factories and similar organizations that employ considerable numbers of workers. Usually this division attempts to appoint in every such establishment a "plant committee," on which labor and management are both represented. This committee then is expected to organize a solicitation of all employees, including executives. Sometimes it may prove impossible to effect this type of arrangement. Perhaps management assumes responsibility for the campaign in the plant, and labor is not represented. Actually, it may be difficult to obtain adequate labor representation if a number of different unions (A.F. of L. or independent) are active in the plant. Where a C.I.O. union is organized in a plant, labor representation is simpler to arrange because there is only one union to be represented. Sometimes management may refuse to permit any solicitation among its employees. This situation is encountered most frequently in periods of labor shortage, when management may be unwilling to risk offending employees by appearing to sponsor a demand upon their earnings for the support of programs in which many of them may have very little interest. In 1943, for example, some large employers made very liberal contributions from the funds of the company with the explicit understanding that no solicitation would be made in the plant among the employees.

The drive made by the industrial division is more likely to draw public criticism than any other part of the campaign. Partly this is because of the danger that the solicitation, even when sponsored jointly by labor and management, may seem to take on elements of coercion.<sup>43</sup> And partly, no doubt, it is because plant campaign committees ordinarily advocate the "pay roll deduction plan." Under this plan the worker pledges a total gift of a certain amount which is to be deducted by management from his pay check on a weekly or a monthly basis for a specific period of time. Management then forwards the proceeds at regular intervals to the central office of the chest. As a result of this arrangement, many workers found that, in 1943 and 1944, deductions were currently made each pay period for (1) social security taxes, (2) income taxes, (3) Red Cross, (4) community and war fund, and (5) war bonds. Although wages were comparatively high during this period, many workers nevertheless complained that the ease of authorizing a pay roll deduction had left them short of

<sup>43</sup> See below, pp. 443-45.

cash for current needs. One evidence that this had occurred was provided by the figures on redemption of war bonds. The volume of bonds sold by their owners in 1943-44 was a subject for frequent complaint by financial experts. Possibly the reason was that wage-earners had need for more ready cash than was left in their pay envelopes after all authorized deductions had been made. It should be pointed out in this connection, however, that leaders both in the A.F. of L. and in the C.I.O., presumably with the approval of their constituencies, vigorously advocated the pay roll deduction plan both for sale of war bonds and for contributions to the war-related philanthropies.

Other divisions found in most chest campaigns are (1) the women's division and (2) the residential division. The women's division is usually managed exclusively by women. It seeks contributions from women of independent means and from women who own or manage business establishments and shops. The residential division, as its name implies, organizes a house-to-house canvass throughout the community.

Naturally, the structure of the campaign organization varies from one community to another. Often the city is divided into geographical districts, and each team of solicitors is responsible for seeing the prospects in the area to which it is assigned. Frequently this plan is supplemented by the organization of auxiliary teams or committees that operate on an occupational, rather than a geographical, basis. Thus special teams may be assigned the task of soliciting industrial concerns, others may be asked to cover certain groups of workers, such as public employees, the personnel of public utility corporations, the staffs of mercantile establishments, etc. This dual approach can be handled in such a way that there is little or no duplication of effort. If a certain large industry is to be covered by a special committee, the teams assigned to the geographical area in which the industry is located are instructed not to solicit in the plant and are not given prospect cards for any of those who will be reached at the plant by the special committee.

The interesting and highly organized methodology of the community-wide campaign for funds was not originated by the community chests. The Y.M.C.A. is usually credited with having first developed this type of approach to the problem of fund-raising. Prior to World War I, the Y.M.C.A. was conspicuous among social agencies for its success in financing its program. Its community-wide campaign for funds, though usually for the purpose of building or expanding the physical plant rather than for current operating expenses, provided a pattern which the emerging chest movement was glad to adopt. The chests, however, have developed

and improved the pattern. In 1940, 552 chests in the United States raised approximately \$86,000,000. Some chests have a record of obtaining one gift from every four adults in the population. The average for all chests is one gift for every five or six adults in the population. On an average, chests throughout the country have been able to raise about \$1.78 per capita population. This figure, of course, obscures many variations. Some chests have been able to raise in excess of \$4.00 per capita population for local charities. This is a phenomenal record and indicates the extent to which the chests have developed campaign methodology.

#### THE BUDGETING PROCEDURE

Chests have also devoted great effort to the perfecting of the budgeting procedure. Major responsibility for passing on budgets usually rests on a central budget committee. Usually this is a committee of the chest, though it ordinarily includes representatives of the council of social agencies. Member-agencies of the chest are invited, well in advance of the beginning of the fiscal year, to submit their requests for funds for the ensuing year. These requests are submitted on uniform blanks supplied by the chest. Detailed information is required relating both to the fiscal operations of the agency and to its service program. Usually figures are presented in parallel columns covering the current year and two or three preceding years. In an adjacent column appears the request for the ensuing year, item by item. Supplementary data may also be appended to indicate reasons for any substantial changes envisaged in the request. Needless to say, "substantial changes" are usually requests for increases, since most agencies are constantly confronted with social needs which they are unable to meet.

These data are then carefully checked and analyzed in the chest office. Sometimes additional information may be requested. The material submitted by the agencies, together with the analyses made by the staff of the chest, is then placed in the hands of the budget committee. Each member is expected to study this material and to be prepared to discuss it at the forthcoming committee meetings. Next a series of budget hearings is held. Each agency is given an opportunity to appear before the budget committee to defend its request and to answer questions about it.<sup>24</sup> Usually

<sup>24</sup> In Chicago an interesting experiment was recently initiated by substituting group hearings for individual hearings. The committee responsible for this experiment made the following report with respect to it: "This year [1943] an experiment was tried with group hearings. Group work agencies functioning within the Stock Yards area came in together and discussed the problems of the communities in which they function, common program and personnel problems, and common budget problems. Individual agency budget problems were then discussed. The same procedure was followed with a group of agencies working primarily with Negroes

the agency is represented at the budget hearing by its president, its executive, and one or two board members. Immediately after each hearing the budget committee decides upon the allocation which it will recommend for the agency. In some cities all hearings are conducted by the entire budget committee. In cities where the chest includes a large number of agencies, the budget committee is organized into subcommittees for the purpose of conducting hearings. One subcommittee may be responsible for all hearings of family welfare agencies, another for the hearings of recreation agencies, another for the health agencies, etc. The subcommittees subsequently report to the entire budget committee to obtain approval of their recommendations. The final step is for the budget committee to report the results of its work to the board of directors of the chest. The board has power to alter the decisions of the budget committee and occasionally does so, but usually the recommendations of the budget committee are approved. Agencies not satisfied with the treatment they have received are thus afforded an opportunity to appeal before the board takes final action.

The budget hearings are held in some cities prior to the annual campaign for funds and in other cities after the campaign is over. If the hearings are held before the campaign, the chest then knows the amount of money that must be raised to meet the needs of the agencies. But the needs of the agencies may change rapidly. Hence budgeting is likely to be more accurate if it is postponed until just before the opening of the fiscal year. In one city budget hearings were held for many years prior to the fall campaign for funds. This meant that the agencies had to submit in the month of June their estimates for the fiscal year beginning the following January. In other words, six months was required to prepare the material, to have it analyzed in the chest office, to conduct the budget hearings, and to arrive at final recommendations. Recently this city decided to change its procedure and to defer the budget hearings until after the completion of the campaign for funds. In this way allocations will be made just prior to the period for which they are granted. They should therefore rest upon a more realistic appraisal of the year's needs than could have been arrived

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on the South Side. Another joint hearing was held with two group work agencies functioning in the South Chicago area. The two Negro projects also held a joint hearing. The Reviewing Committee is of the opinion that the joint hearings were successful, from the standpoint of saving the time of committee members and agency representatives, but more especially from the standpoint of furthering better understanding on the part of the agencies of problems within their area and resources available to cope with the problems" ("Report of the Reviewing Committee on Group Work Budgets to the Budget Committee of the Community Fund of Chicago" [mimeographed; February 17, 1943]), p. 1.

at many months earlier. Of course, if budgeting occurs after the campaign, the quota for the drive must be determined by estimate. In most cities this can be done with a fairly high degree of accuracy. The chest has financial data relating to a series of preceding years and usually receives monthly service reports, in addition, from all member-agencies. It is therefore in a position to identify fields in which substantial budgetary changes may be expected in the ensuing year and can utilize this information in arriving at an estimate of the total amount the agencies will require. The trend throughout the country is in the direction of postcampaign budgeting.

In most of the well-organized chests the work of the budget committee does not terminate with the completion of the budget hearings. Subsequent meetings are held throughout the year. Frequently it proves necessary to amend the budgets of some agencies during the course of the year. Some agencies may file requests for supplementary allocations. In other instances the monthly reports submitted by the member-agencies may suggest that some of the original allocations may be reduced. Obviously, cases of these types should be passed upon by the budget committee before final action is taken by the board of directors of the chest.

Although some contributors pay the full amount of their pledge to the community chest at one time, the great majority pay at specified periods, such as each month or each quarter.<sup>15</sup> Chests likewise pay their allocations to agencies on a monthly basis. The agencies send the chest routinely a statement of their expenses for the preceding month and their estimate of the amount needed in the following month. The chest then remits to the agencies on the basis of their estimated needs. Thus the agency does not usually receive one-twelfth of its annual allocation each month. The monthly payments usually fluctuate, since expenses may vary considerably from season to season. Thus, some recreation agencies that operate summer camps may require larger amounts during the summer months. On the other hand, agencies that grant relief usually make their largest expenditures in the winter months. Adjustments are made in such a way that the agency does not receive during the year a total that exceeds the amount allocated by the budget committee. Any increase in the total requires supplementary action by the budget committee and approval of the revised budget by the chest board.

<sup>15</sup> Large employers often agree to deduct the pledge from the wages of employees, if they so designate, and to forward these amounts to the chest routinely. The chest itself sends bills each month to those who wish to pay personally and directly to the chest office. Naturally, some pledges become delinquent. Many chests employ collectors to follow up on these delinquent pledges. The percentage of delinquencies, however, is amazingly low. The average amount set aside by chests for shrinkage is 5 per cent. Presumably, this amount will take care of losses due to deaths of donors, removals from the city, cancellation of pledges, etc.

## EMPLOYED STAFFS OF CHESTS AND COUNCILS

There is considerable variation in the size of the employed staffs of councils and chests. In large cities the council may have a director and several assistant directors. Usually each assistant is in charge of certain divisions or subcouncils; thus one assistant might carry responsibility for the work of the health council, another for the work of the recreation council, another for the work of the family welfare council, etc. In addition, such a council would undoubtedly have a research staff and might also operate the social service exchange and certain other joint services. In smaller communities, there is often only one full-time professional worker in the council.

Large chests usually have, in addition to a full-time director, several assistants and, of course, a sizable clerical staff. Ordinarily one assistant is in charge of the work of the budget committee. Some chests employ a director of public relations or publicity. In addition, some operate the social service exchange, the central statistical bureau, and similar co-ordinating and planning services. In large cities the director may have several assistants, each of whom is in charge of one or more of the major divisions of the campaign organization. Thus there may be an assistant in charge of the business division of the campaign, another in charge of the residential division, etc. In some chests the director is not expected to take charge of the fund-raising campaign; rather, this responsibility is entrusted to outside professional money-raising organizations. These organizations put on the campaign for funds and are paid by the chest for the services rendered. In some cities in which the chest and council are organically related under one governing board, one individual may be director of both chest and council. Frequently, where this arrangement prevails, the director spends most of his time on the fund-raising part of the job, and his first assistant is in charge of the work of the council.

## SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Chests are supported, of course, by funds which they themselves raise. The average cost for chests of all sizes is 7.8 per cent of the amount raised.<sup>16</sup> This includes costs for councils of social agencies and social service exchanges. Most chests report separately on campaign expenses and general year-round administration. The average expenditure for campaigns is 3.1

<sup>16</sup> *Questions and Answers about Community Chests and Councils of Social Agencies* (1937), p. 14.



per cent of the amount raised and for general year-round administration 3.3 per cent.<sup>17</sup>

In a great many cities, councils receive all, or a large part, of their income from chests. Other sources of income are fees paid by agencies (chiefly for social service exchange clearances), membership dues, and contributions from interested individuals or from foundations.<sup>18</sup> Foundation support has been declining in recent years, though at one time some councils received very sizable subsidies from this source. Most public agencies find it difficult, under existing legal provisions, to pay membership dues or to contribute to the support of councils.<sup>19</sup> Contributions are not easy to obtain because councils do not usually engage in direct services to clients and their programs therefore have less appeal to potential donors than the programs of the agencies with direct-service programs. For these reasons the financing of councils is a difficult problem. Some observers believe that councils can never engage effectively and aggressively in the development of social welfare provisions so long as they are tied, administratively and financially, to the chest. These critics point out that chests must inevitably be dominated mainly by laymen with large financial interests and that members of this dominant group tend to hold conservative views on social and economic questions. Under the influence of this group the council tends to concern itself largely with matters that are not highly controversial and that, accordingly, are not likely to give offense. The foregoing point of view is reflected in Documents 13-D and 13-E. If the criticism implied in these documents is generally valid, it would appear that a completely new approach to social planning would be required. Certainly there is no evidence to suggest that councils could continue to

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> In Baltimore, 50 per cent of the budget of the Council of Social Agencies is provided from public funds through the Department of Public Welfare. The remainder comes from private funds, as follows: Community Fund, 25 per cent; Associated Jewish Charities, 12½ per cent; Catholic Charities, 12½ per cent. Specific queries relative to the effect of tax support upon the freedom and security of the Council were answered by the executive secretary, Miss Anna D. Ward, as follows: "It is unlikely that our public support would be lost because we advocate some development that the public agency or elected officials disapprove of, because we would not advocate something that could not be backed up by considerable public opinion. It is our policy not to act as a pressure group in a controversial issue. There is danger, however, that our appropriation from the Department of Public Welfare may be reduced when it becomes necessary to reduce municipal expenditures."

<sup>19</sup> In the opinion of some students of the problem, councils will not enjoy a satisfactory position in the community until such time as public agencies believe in them and help to support and manage them on a basis of equal partnership with the private agencies (see Doc. 13-E) pp. 486-88.

exist if chest support were suddenly withdrawn, except, perhaps, in a very few places where foundation support might be obtained.

#### EXTENT OF CHEST AND COUNCIL MOVEMENT

It is never possible to say with complete accuracy just how many chests and councils exist in the United States. The number would always depend upon the definitions adopted. The writer remembers his surprise, for example, when he was informed in a small town in Texas that problems of destitution were handled by "the community chest." Further inquiry revealed that each year, just before Christmas, a group of local businessmen solicited funds up and down Main Street on an informal and personal basis, without previous discussion of the amounts to be sought. This money was used to buy Christmas baskets for the poor; and any surplus that remained was retained until the following summer to help support the town band. Scores of similar informal community enterprises exist in many parts of the United States, and some of them are known locally as community chests. The number of community chests in the country known and recognized by the national organization (Community Chests and Councils, Inc.) was 552 in 1941. Similarly, it is difficult to define exactly a council of social agencies. Presumably most, if not all, of the 552 community chests are engaged in some kind of effort to co-ordinate and improve the social services they support. In addition, however, there are many other social-planning groups, ranging in size and importance from informal discussion clubs to well-organized and well-financed agencies, some of which attempt to cover a field much broader than social welfare as commonly defined, including within their planning activities such matters as taxation, public education, etc.

Tradition and usage have led to fairly general acceptance of "chest" and "council of social agencies" as generic terms. Nevertheless, in a good many communities these organizations bear other names. Among those in common use are "community fund," "community welfare federation," "community union," "united welfare association," "community federation," etc. It is not always possible to tell from the name whether the organization is a chest or a council or both. Ordinarily, of course, the name includes an identifying place-name, such as "Community Fund of Chicago."

It has sometimes been said that both the community chest and the council of social agencies are as "typically American as a piece of pumpkin pie." Certainly, both forms of organization have experienced a growth in this country that has had no counterpart elsewhere in the world. Of the

448 known chests in the world in 1937, 435 were located in the United States, and an additional 10 were in Canada.<sup>20</sup> Thus, only three—one in Cuba and two in South Africa—were outside the territories of these two North American nations. Councils likewise follow in the line of an honored tradition; for, as one observer has pointed out, they represent an attempt to apply in the field of social welfare "the early American principle of the town meeting." The basic council idea of trying to arrive at "a meeting of minds" is one that has found expression also in other fields, such as education, labor, agriculture, etc. But in the field of social welfare the idea produced a structure and a methodology that perhaps have not been equally well developed elsewhere.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF THE NATIONAL WAR FUND ON JOINT FINANCING

The creation of the National War Fund seems likely to result in an extension of joint financing. The first National War Fund campaign, held in the autumn of 1943, raised in excess of \$125,000,000 for the support of the U.S.O. and some eighteen other agencies whose programs are designed to relieve war-created needs. In effect, the National War Fund is a national community chest. Like most chests, it falls short of including all organizations in the field. The American Red Cross, for example, is not a member. In addition, a considerable group of agencies are not included whose work is believed to be to some extent a duplication of the program of one or another of the agencies supported by the National War Fund.

Presumably, the National War Fund will continue in existence for the duration of the war and until peacetime conditions have been restored. Some observers believe it may be succeeded by some type of national community chest to finance the peacetime programs of a score or more of our leading national private agencies. At present these national agencies are in a position not unlike that of the local agencies prior to the organization of local community chests. Often the money they are able to raise bears little or no relationship either to the need in the field or to the quality of service rendered. Hence there is reason to believe that some kind of continuous joint budgeting and financing of these national programs might mark an important step in advance. Whether this step will be taken cannot at present be foreseen.

It is already certain, however, that many new local chests will continue on a permanent basis as a result of the National War Fund program. In

<sup>20</sup> *Yesterday and Today with Community Chests* (Community Chests and Councils, Inc., 1937), p. 21.

the tricounty area of metropolitan Chicago, five new chests have been incorporated in suburban communities as a result of the war-fund effort and several others are in process of formation. A similar expansion of the chest movement is reported in most other sections of the country. The reason for this development is clear. A basic policy of the National War Fund is to "maintain the home front." Hence, in order not to compete with local permanent agencies, the National War Fund has sought, wherever possible, to combine its drive with the annual campaigns of the local agencies. In community-chest towns this meant a united drive for the war fund and for the agencies supported by the local chest. But drives were also combined in communities that had no chests. Thus in 1943 in metropolitan Chicago not only the twenty-five chest towns but also an additional twenty-seven nonchest suburbs combined the National War Fund campaign with an appeal for one or more local agencies. Combined appeals of a similar character were organized in many parts of the country. As a result many communities have become "community-chest conscious." It is now freely predicted that the number of permanent chests following the war will run well up into the thousands. Most of these new chests will be in small communities. Since small cities and towns are often inexperienced in the administration of social welfare programs, the implications for community organization are important. Some of these new groups should provide a starting-point for enlarging local understanding of community needs and of the existing public and private programs that can be made available to meet these needs.

#### SOCIAL GAINS INDUCED BY JOINT FINANCING

In the early days of the chest movement considerable difference of opinion existed as to whether joint financing represented a forward or a backward step in social welfare development. Even today, after a fairly long experience with chests, some differences of opinion exist. A majority of observers appear to believe, however, that the chest has made several important contributions. Among those most commonly cited are the following: (1) chests have increased both the numbers of persons contributing and the amounts of money available to private social agencies; (2) chests have brought about a fairer apportionment of funds among the private agencies; (3) chests have influenced the development of improved methods of statistical and financial accounting in social agencies; and (4) chests have contributed the important element of establishing a definite time for making decisions in social welfare planning. Inevitably, some of these gains have been purchased at the price of countervailing

losses. Differences also exist in the degree to which these gains have been realized in different communities. Hence some examination of the merits of these claims is advisable.

#### 1. INCREASE IN DONORS AND AMOUNTS CONTRIBUTED

The figures in Tables 2 and 3 are representative of the experience in a long list of cities. There would appear to be no doubt of the accuracy of the statement that the chest form of money-raising has very substantially increased both the number of givers and the amounts contributed to pri-

TABLE 2\*

AMOUNTS RAISED BY 9 COMMUNITIES THE YEAR BEFORE, AND THE FIRST YEAR OF, FINANCIAL FEDERATION AND IN 1937

CITY	YEAR ORGANIZED	AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED		
		Year before Chest	First Year of Chest	1937
Buffalo.....	1917	\$100,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 715,966
Cincinnati.....	1915	118,000	157,000	1,811,233
Cleveland.....	1913	350,000	377,000	3,321,632
Detroit.....	1918	700,000	10,500,000†	2,243,936
Indianapolis.....	1920	200,000	403,000	700,017
Louisville.....	1917	135,000	237,000	596,444
Minneapolis.....	1918	400,000	1,070,000†	1,410,720
Rochester.....	1918	333,000	1,257,500	1,004,741
Seattle.....	1921	591,000	637,000	574,989

\* Data taken from *Questions and Answers about Community Chests and Councils of Social Agencies* (Community Chests and Councils, Inc., 1937), p. 9. Data for 1937 taken from reports received through private correspondence with office of Community Chests and Councils, Inc.

† Includes building funds and war-relief funds.

‡ Includes war-relief funds.

vate social work.<sup>21</sup> Some people believe that this advance has cost a great deal in terms of loss of interest in specific programs. The individual who formerly made sacrifices in order to support the Y.M.C.A., the family welfare association, or some other agency in which he was interested now makes a donation to the chest without achieving a feeling of identification with the program he believes in. Perhaps there is no way either to prove or to disprove this opinion. It should be pointed out, however, that most agencies are still very eager to enjoy the active support and participation of laymen. Hence there are still many opportunities open to any layman who wishes to be personally identified with the work of the agencies. Moreover, the very large increase in donors suggests that at least as many feel a sense of identity with agency programs as in the pre-chest

<sup>21</sup> For additional facts bearing on this question see Doc. 13-I, pp. 495-96.

days when the total list of contributors was only a fraction of the present number.

One of the chief problems relating to the increase in the number of donors has been the tendency to exert pressure to obtain contributions. Even though the chest adopts a rule against this practice, it is not always possible to achieve compliance. Let us assume, for the sake of an example, that the manager of a certain foundry is appointed a team captain in the annual drive for funds. His position in the foundry enables him to put

TABLE 3\*

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTORS TO PRIVATE SOCIAL WORK BEFORE  
AND AFTER FEDERATION, AND IN 1937, IN 10 COMMUNITIES

CITY	YEAR OR- GANIZED	NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTORS		
		Year be- fore Chest	First Year of Chest	1937
Baltimore.....	1915	3,750	4,300	84,091
Buffalo.....	1917	1,500	2,300	119,513
Cincinnati.....	1915	3,000	4,000	121,849
Cleveland.....	1913	5,000†	5,000‡	290,003
Dallas.....	1915	500	1,000	29,982
Indianapolis.....	1920	3,000	11,000	68,509
Louisville.....	1917	3,400	5,500	50,471
Minneapolis.....	1918	6,200	102,000§	107,784
Portland.....	1921	5,000	36,000	47,662
Seattle.....	1921	6,000	42,000	56,739

\* Data taken from *Questions and Answers about Community Chests and Councils of Social Agencies*, p. 20.

† Including 4,000 irregular or casual givers.

‡ Including about 2,000 who gave directly to the agencies.

§ Local campaign combined with war-chest campaign—hence large number of givers and later decrease (in years immediately following).

pressure on his employees to contribute. He knows that the chest has a rule against this practice. Nevertheless, he wants his team to "go over the top," and he realizes that the chest will scarcely be able to check up to see whether scores, or perhaps hundreds, of volunteer solicitors have scrupulously observed the rule. He therefore instructs his foremen to see to it that the men under them "come through."

Cases of this type that are brought to light usually evoke bitter criticism. One editorial writer commented on the practice as follows: "Most community chest drives we have studied are devices to take the 'heat' off the owners of industries, large stores, banks and utilities, and to pass the actual charity burden on to the fourteen-dollar-a-week employees. In many cities one per cent is eyelashed out of those fourteen dollars. While

it is called one per cent of his income, it is really one per cent of his capital. If the executives and corporations who back these drives would give one per cent of their capital, the procedure would seem a little less Jesse Jamesish—and would soon be abandoned.”<sup>22</sup>

Since chests cannot always completely prevent volunteer solicitors from exercising coercion, they often adopt the practice of canceling the pledge of any employee whose gift is said to have been obtained under duress or to be in excess of what he can afford to give. Sometimes, for example, a wife will write to the chest and complain that her husband should not have pledged a gift out of his wages, in view of his family responsibilities and the size of his income. It is a common practice, in such circumstances, to cancel the pledge without protest. A recent study<sup>23</sup> of employee group contributions in 62 cities revealed that less than three-fourths (71.8 per cent) of the employees solicited actually made contributions. The highest proportion contributing was among schoolteachers (92.7 per cent) and the lowest among county employees (66.1 per cent). The proportions contributing in two other important employee groups were as follows: utility employees, 73.8 per cent; industrial plants, 68.3 per cent. In presenting these figures, the author made the following comment with respect to them: “If coercion were attempted in the cities co-operating in this study—and it seems probable that the instances were few and far between, and not chest-inspired—the results in terms of percentage of total employees subscribing to the community chest would indicate that the attempt was not very effective.”

The accessibility of employee groups and the ease with which they can be solicited has undoubtedly resulted in their contributing in larger numbers than the population as a whole. In 1936, in 156 chests, gifts of less than \$5.00 accounted for 12.7 per cent of the total raised.<sup>24</sup> A large part of these small gifts comes from employee groups. In ensuing years the employee pledges have accounted for 20 per cent of the total raised.<sup>25</sup> An official of the national organization (Community Chests and Councils, Inc.) has said, in commenting on this increase: “With changing relations between employer and employee, and with the development of employee organizations and unions, the approach to employee groups has required

<sup>22</sup> Rev. Edward Dowling, S.J., “Notes for a Grammar of Politics,” *The Queen's Work*, XXIV, No. 4 (January, 1937), 3.

<sup>23</sup> Madeline Berry, “The Spread in Giving,” *Community*, XVII, No. 2 (October, 1941), 20-22.

<sup>24</sup> *Questions and Answers about Community Chests and Councils of Social Agencies*, p. 19.

<sup>25</sup> Blanchard, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

modification. While earlier attempts were made in a number of chests to secure employee representation on chest boards and committees and to develop employee relations in other ways, recent changes in employee organization have furnished a great stimulus to this move."<sup>26</sup> The implication of this statement is that employees as a group supply a considerable proportion of the total amount contributed to chests and that the trend is in the direction of according them increased representation in the management of the chest. If this development continues, perhaps those who have criticized chest relationships with employee groups would feel that one of their major objections had been removed. Another point to bear in mind in this connection is that coercion is a hazard encountered in any large-scale drive and might occur in a campaign for capital funds conducted by a single agency as easily as in the joint chest drive. Hence it would be inaccurate to assume that the increase in donors and contributions resulting from chest organization produced a new evil peculiar to federated financing. The problem is one that is inherent in any kind of mass solicitation and can be extirpated only by persistent efforts on the part of the chest and organized resistance on the part of employee groups.

## 2. IMPROVED APPORTIONMENT OF FUNDS

The claim that chests have brought about a fairer apportionment of available moneys among the private agencies has also been questioned by some observers. These critics assert that there has been a tendency to "freeze" the division of funds at substantially the point existing prior to the organization of the chest. In the period immediately preceding the rise of the chest movement, certain institutional agencies, such as the Y.M.C.A., were obliged to raise large sums each year to maintain their physical plants and their programs. Some of those who have been dissatisfied with the division of revenues effected by chests think that these agencies have continued to receive about the same amounts as before, even though other programs of equal or greater importance have, as a result, been obliged to carry on without any material increase in budget. While this may be the situation in some communities, the available figures indicate that it has not been true for the country as a whole. Group work agencies, which received 25 per cent of all chest funds in 1929, were cut to 19 per cent during the depression period, when relief needs were exceedingly exigent. By 1939 they had been restored to 24 per cent. Conversely, family welfare and dependency agencies received 25 per cent of all chest funds in 1929, 39 per cent in 1932, and 25 per cent again in 1939. Hospitals, which

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



received 11.6 per cent of the chest revenue in 1929, dropped to 10 per cent in 1939.<sup>27</sup> These shifts suggest that budget committees endeavor to respond to changing needs. It is also worth noting in this connection that the list of agencies supported by chests changes constantly. Sometimes agencies withdraw and undertake to support themselves. In other cases the chest may drop agencies or induce two or more of them to combine. In the period 1929-39, in 96 chests, 699 agencies were newly accepted as members, and 654 were dropped. Among those that have withdrawn from the chest in many cities or have never joined are the agencies whose large budgets exercise great influence on the percentage distribution of chest funds, as is indicated by Table 4.

TABLE 4\*  
AGENCY PARTICIPATION IN CHESTS IN 157 CITIES, 1935

Agency	In Chest	Not in Chest	Agency Not in City
Boy Scouts.....	143	14	.....
Girl Scouts.....	111	46	.....
Red Cross.....	100	57	.....
Salvation Army.....	136	21	.....
Tuberculosis Ass'n.....	58	99	.....
Y.M.C.A.....	105	40	12
Y.W.C.A.....	122	20	15

\* Data taken from *Questions and Answers about Community Chests and Councils of Social Agencies*, p. 13.

Likewise, in a considerable number of cities, the Jewish and Catholic agencies, which often require large budgets, are not members of the chest. In 1935, in 44 out of 145 cities the Catholic agencies did not participate in the chest. In the same year, 50 out of 131 cities did not include the Jewish agencies in the chest. Naturally, all agencies with large fixed charges tend to decrease the amount of latitude a budget committee can exercise in allocating funds. The fact that many of these agencies do not depend upon the chest for support suggests that in many cities the central budget committee is in a position to adjust allocations each year to take account of changing needs. Moreover, from the standpoint of general principles of community organization, it is clear that some effort to divide funds on a rational basis is better than no effort. Perhaps some budget committees are guilty of careless or unskilful work, but certainly the total result of their operations throughout the country must produce better results than would be achieved by leaving the problem of allocation to be settled solely by competitive fund-raising.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

Of course a fair and rational allocation of funds by the chest budget committee directly affects only the private segment of the field of social work. The extensive expenditures in the public field are controlled by public authorities. In some cities in which chest funds are very carefully allocated, there may still be gross disparities among fields, owing to unwise appropriations of tax funds. For example, reasonably adequate amounts may be appropriated for pauper burials and for almshouse administration in a community that cuts allowances for public home relief to a point that necessitates the closing of cases in which urgent need still exists. Chests and councils may sometimes attempt to influence public authorities to correct such situations; or the budget committee may provide funds to carry some of the load that has been rejected. But the chest cannot, of course, by its own action, effect the needed changes. This is, as a matter of fact, a grave problem to which no adequate answer has thus far been provided. Whether an authority can be developed with power to influence and adjust allocations throughout the entire field of social work, both public and private, is a question that cannot at present be answered.

### 3. IMPROVED FINANCIAL AND STATISTICAL CONTROLS

Most agencies agree that the influence of the chest has been constructive in the field of accounting and statistics. Sound principles of administration required that the chest develop careful financial controls. Although many agencies had excellent systems of bookkeeping prior to the advent of the chest, some were very deficient in this respect. Moreover, there is considerable advantage in uniformity. The chest, by requiring comparable reports on uniform blanks, has contributed to the development of systems that facilitate comparisons among the agencies. These comparisons, in turn, have been useful to the agencies in studying their own financial problems and to the budget committee in analyzing requests for funds.

Similarly, the need for comparable service data soon became apparent. The chests, through their national office, instituted, in co-operation with the University of Chicago, a project for the development of uniform methods of service reporting in the various fields of social work. Manuals were prepared in some fields to promote uniform definition of terms and comparable methods of reporting. After two and a half years of experimentation, this project<sup>28</sup> was turned over to the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor in 1930. The standards of service reporting thus developed have steadily improved. Before this effort was

<sup>28</sup> For a more detailed account of this project see A. W. McMillen, *Measurement in Social Work* (1930).

initiated, it was rarely possible to add together the service figures of all agencies operating in the same field in a given city. Now city-wide totals can be obtained in a considerable group of cities and intercity comparisons have likewise become a reality.

#### 4. INTRODUCTION OF TIME FACTOR IN PLANNING

The budgeting procedure introduces a time factor into social planning. It is clear that to continue with planning is often much easier than to act. This is particularly true with respect to controversial issues. The evidence may suggest that a certain agency has outlived its usefulness and should be disbanded; but the agency may have several influential supporters who want the program to continue. Rather than risk offending these supporters, it may be a temptation to let matters drift in the hope that the agency will find ways to improve or to modify its program. If the agency is able to raise its own budget, there may, in fact, be little else that can be done. The council may point out the deficiencies in the work and may even suggest that the program is no longer needed. It has little power, however, to induce the agency to dissolve against its own will. The chest, however, is in a position to exercise pressure, if it wishes to do so, by refusing to grant further funds to the agency. As a matter of fact, the chest is obliged to make some kind of decision at least once a year when allocations are made. It may decide to make suggestions for improvement of the agency's program; it may make its allocation contingent upon acceptance of these recommendations; or it may flatly refuse to give the agency any further support. Regardless of what the action may be, the budgeting process automatically insures that some kind of decision will be reached.

#### SOCIAL LOSSES CHARGED TO JOINT FINANCING

The foregoing claims that have been made by proponents of joint financing have not gone unchallenged, as has been indicated. In addition, certain other charges have been made by those who prefer independent campaigns by the agencies. Chief among these are: (1) autocratic control of agency programs by the chest; (2) domination of the chest by conservative financial interests; and (3) negative effects of the so-called "immunity rule."

##### I. AUTOCRATIC CONTROL

With respect to the first of these charges, it is difficult to form an accurate judgment. The line is always difficult to draw between autocracy, on the one hand, and lack of backbone, on the other. The charge of autocracy often proceeds from agencies that have found it necessary to modify

or curtail their programs because of pressures brought to bear upon them by the chest. In some cases these changes in program were badly needed, and the agency's resistance reflected merely a natural desire to preserve the status quo. In other instances the pressure appears to have arisen from the chest's need to cut expenses. It is doubtful whether a bona fide case can be discovered in which the chest insisted upon unwarranted changes in program because of spite against the agency or because of the religious or philosophical implications of its program. In some cities certain agencies, such as birth-control leagues, may have been refused membership for such reasons; but refusal of membership is presumably a prerogative of any corporate body and is, also, of course, quite different from autocratic control of program. Undoubtedly, experiences have varied widely in different communities with respect to this problem. Perhaps, under some leaders, chests have at times attempted to exercise undue control over program and administration. But, on the other hand, complete *laissez faire* is an outworn doctrine in community organization, no less than in economics. There is ample evidence in most communities to indicate that the extreme individualism of some agencies retards the growth of an integrated program. There is a need for power to curb some of this individualism; but such power should be exercised, of course, not by self-appointed minorities but by those to whom a delegation of authority has been made by the majority through normal democratic processes.

## 2. UNREPRESENTATIVE MANAGEMENT

An examination of the list of directors of community chests does suggest that men and women of wealth predominate in the management of the enterprise. Most agencies are not in a position to criticize this alignment, however, since they themselves are, in the main, governed by persons from the same economic class. Nor does it follow that the point of view of the governing body is necessarily conservative. While great wealth is frequently associated with conservatism, there are many variants from type. There is also current among individuals of wealth, particularly in the large cities, an unwritten, but widely observed, rule that it is not "cricket" for them to impose their points of view upon educational institutions or charitable agencies with which they chance to be identified. Hence the predominance of wealthy individuals on governing boards by no means always signifies that the agency is hampered in the development of a progressive program. It is, nevertheless, true that the composition of both chest and agency boards is, in a great many places, far from representative. Some improvement has been noted in the past decade,

however, probably because of a growing recognition that sound community organization cannot rest upon a basis of class distinctions.

More recently the impact of the war has enormously stimulated the hitherto halting trend toward vesting control in a more widely representative group. The labor organizations of the country became interested in certain foreign war-relief projects before the United States entered the war. Local and national committees under union auspices urged their members to contribute generously to these causes. These efforts were redoubled after the United States' entry into the conflict made it apparent that large drives for domestic war charities were in the offing, in addition to the continuing campaigns for foreign relief. In the beginning the funds collected by the unions were transmitted to their national headquarters to be allocated among the various appeals, both for foreign relief and for domestic war-service programs. In the summer of 1942, as a result of a series of conferences, this arrangement was changed. Representatives of both of the major labor movements participated in these conferences, as well as representatives of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., the latter being the spokesman for the numerous war chests then rapidly springing up in all parts of the country.

The outlines of the agreements<sup>29</sup> reached in these conferences are set forth in Documents 13-K and 13-L. Under the new plan the labor organizations make their contributions to foreign and domestic war charities through local war chests rather than through the national headquarters of the labor organizations. This arrangement is advantageous in a number of respects both to the unions and to the war chests. Of special interest here, however, is the provision in the agreement that there shall be "union representation by influential labor leaders on the chest governing board and general chest campaign and allocation committees." The agreement also specifies that the local committees which have been responsible for the relief campaigns in the unions (the United Nations Relief Committee of the A.F. of L. and the National C.I.O. Committee for American and Allied War Relief) shall be "recognized and incorporated as integral parts of the local war chest campaign organization." In a joint statement commenting on these agreements the presidents of the two national labor organizations said that this development represented "cooperation between organized labor and American philanthropy on a national basis for the first time in the history of either." These agreements relate, of course, only to the war chests. In many communities, however, the war-chest cam-

<sup>29</sup> Similar agreements were signed by the two national labor groups and the American National Red Cross.

paign includes the budgets of the local private agencies as well as the quotas for foreign and domestic war charities. Hence the practical result in many communities will be that labor representatives will share with other local citizens the responsibility for supporting and managing local philanthropic programs. Whether, at the end of the war, this arrangement will be carried over into the normal peacetime organization cannot at present be predicted. Some observers are of the opinion that labor representation in the management of private philanthropy has come to stay and that governing boards in general will in the future be much more widely representative than they have commonly been in the past.

### 3. THE "IMMUNITY RULE"

In social work finance the immunity rule means that the donor, by making one contribution, secures himself against repeated or multiple solicitation throughout the year. In pre-chest days it was not uncommon for certain individuals to be approached for contributions dozens of times in a single year. The organization of the chest sharply reduced the number of these appeals. In some places an individual who formerly contributed to twenty or more social agencies now found that he was asked for only one contribution each year. Solicitors used the immunity rule as a talking point in seeking contributions. Of course, this could be done only in case all, or almost all, of the local agencies were included in the chest. Some critics believe that chests accordingly accepted as members some low-grade agencies that did not merit support from the community. The chests answer this criticism by pointing out that most of the low-grade organizations would continue to launch independent campaigns if they were excluded from the chest and that the opportunity to improve their standards is enhanced if they are subject to the general supervision of the chest. Other critics assert that the immunity rule widens the gulf between donors and agencies. Individual campaigns, they believe, have educational values and familiarize donors with specific programs. While this may be true with respect to donors who are approached only a few times each year, education undoubtedly gives way to confusion if the contributor is solicited by a dozen or more organizations.

In most communities the immunity rule operates only in a modified sense. Almost always there are some agencies that are not members of the chest. These agencies continue to raise funds independently. Donors, in subscribing to the chest, do not purchase immunity from solicitation by these nonchest agencies. Whether the immunity rule, to the extent that it is operative, has been detrimental to social work probably must remain

a matter of opinion. In the case of some well-known national organizations, such as the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A., it may be that an independent local campaign promotes educational objectives that are of importance to the agency. Whether agencies of a strictly local character are equally benefited by independent drives seems doubtful; for these agencies must compete not only with one another but also with organizations that enjoy the advantage of large-scale national publicity.

#### RESERVE FUNDS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

A considerable number of social agencies own and operate expensive plants. Among these are settlements, Y.M.C.A.'s, and similar group work agencies, hospitals, clinics, and institutions for children or for the aged. The wear and tear on these plants is excessive, and eventually there is need for extensive repairs, for additions, or for completely new facilities. Some effort has been made by chests to foresee these needs and to build up reserve funds to meet them. These efforts have not been conspicuously successful. A reserve fund is a constant temptation. Almost every agency sees opportunities to increase its usefulness and would like to obtain additional money with which to do so. Moreover, bona fide emergencies arise, which both the agencies and the chest may wish to meet. If a reserve fund exists, the pressure to draw upon it becomes almost irresistible; and if the fund is tapped for one purpose, presently numerous additional worthy claims are made upon it. In addition, there is a sound basis for the position that chest funds, which are derived mainly from the community's current income, should be used to meet contemporary needs and that capital investments should come, in the main, from accumulated wealth. For these reasons most chests have found that it is not expedient to attempt to build a reserve fund from which to meet capital needs of agencies. It may prove disastrous to the chest campaign, however, if several agencies launch capital-fund campaigns in a single year. Hence there is usually an agreement between the chest and the agencies that the latter will not undertake to raise capital funds except with the approval of the chest. This means that the agency will arrange to conduct its campaign at a time of year that will interfere as little as possible with the chest's efforts to reach its annual goal.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF NATIONAL AGENCIES TO LOCAL CHESTS AND COUNCILS

The programs of national agencies are usually supported in large part by funds supplied by their local branches. In the Red Cross, for example, fifty cents of the first dollar of each contribution is sent to the national

office to finance disaster relief and other national services provided by the national organization. Comparable plans are in effect in a number of other organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, the Camp Fire Girls, and others. Hence, when one of these agencies affiliates with a chest, a question immediately arises as to the amount the chest will allow for the support of the national program. This problem has been a source of difficulty in many communities. The budget committees of chests are, in general, reluctant to send chest funds outside the community. They wish to keep as much as possible in the city to support the work of the local agencies. National agencies, on the other hand, take the position that their operations are national (and in some cases, international) in scope and that each city should contribute a reasonable amount to the support of these programs. Moreover, national agencies often have definite ideas as to the program their local branches should undertake in the community. In some instances these ideas conflict with the view of the local chest or council or both. Thus the national organization may urge its local branch to expand to meet a certain local need which the chest or the council wishes to have met in some other way. There are thus two points at which the relationships between national agencies and local co-ordinating and financing groups are especially vulnerable. In some instances conflicts have arisen that have resulted in the withdrawal of the local branch from the community chest. Such a development may put an end to the immediate conflict, but it does not necessarily solve the problem, especially if the difference of opinion relates to the scope and character of the work of the local branch.

This whole question of the relationship of national agencies to local social planning groups is very complicated. There would appear to be a need for the development of a set of written principles governing these relationships. Such a statement would not eliminate all conflicts and misunderstandings, but it might reduce the hazard by providing a standard to guide both the national and the local groups. Written agreements covering the division of the field of treatment have proved to be very helpful in preventing misunderstandings among local agencies. It would seem that a comparable approach might be serviceable in promoting improved relationships between planning and promotional activities that are sponsored by local and by national groups respectively.

#### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL PLANNING AND JOINT FINANCING

The central problem in local community organization, at its present stage of development, relates to the adjustment between social-planning



activities and financing. Stated in terms of structure, this means that the basic problem revolves around the relationship between the council of social agencies and the community chest.<sup>30</sup> Social planning, as far as it relates to expansions or new developments, must obviously end in frustration unless it is followed by the appropriating of funds to carry the plans into effect. Likewise, the work of the chest's central budget committee, which determines the amounts to be spent for various kinds of programs, can easily degenerate into a mere reconciling of requests for funds unless it is oriented toward specific accomplishments in the community. The nature of this problem is thrown into clear relief by the following quotations taken from a study made by the budget committee of a community chest a few years ago:

The lack of contact between the Council and the Budget Committee . . . has created a situation which is not only difficult but which must not continue if social planning for the city is to be made effective. It is of vital importance that the Budget Committee know not only the Chest agencies but the work of all social agencies in the city. The members of the Budget Committee need to see the entire picture as well as the segments they now view. Chest agencies cannot live in a world apart, nor can the members of the Budget Committee see the work of the agencies as a world apart. There is constant retardation of social progress when joint planning is lacking.

The resources of the city have not been adequately tapped by the Council in its social planning. The Council has not been altogether co-operative in the social planning done by the Chest, on the ground that this interferes with its prerogatives. And, again, it is desirable to repeat that, in order to do adequate social planning, it is essential that finances be considered. . . . The resentment on the part of the Budget Committee toward the Council's studies is that, as the Council did not use a financial basis for its social planning, its studies almost inevitably entailed a demand for a larger expenditure of funds. It is logical that the minds of the members of the Budget Committee must turn to the actual performances of member-agencies. When you are planning on expending money and carry responsibility for the allocation of that money, it is inevitable that the usage of the money will be an important item for consideration.

Until recently there has been very little direct relationship between the Budget Committee and the Council of Social Agencies. Adding Council staff members to the budget subcommittees has been of some assistance, but this has been going on for too short a time to determine its real value.

<sup>30</sup> See Doc. 13-N, p. 513, for an organization chart of a combined chest-council; and Doc. 13-O, p. 514, for an organization chart of an independent chest and an independent council. It will be noted that the arrangement depicted in Doc. 13-O provides for council participation in the election of the chest board and the naming of the budget committee but does not provide for chest representation on the council. In some places, of course, the council's constitution also provides that its board shall include representation from the chest.

The present Council method of social planning regardless of financial resources has caused difficulties. The fact that the Council is more aware than the Budget Committee of existing agencies other than Chest agencies has been of no help to the Budget Committee. The Council committees' reports on social planning, with the exception of a very few specific studies, never come to the attention of the Budget Committee. The social planning of the Council has been independent of the social planning of the Budget Committee and neither is aware, except through accidental discovery, of the social planning of the other. This is unmistakably unfortunate.

. . . . .

At the recent budget conference when the Council of Social Agencies appeared for its funds, support was asked for two pieces of work of vital importance. One was for the continuation of a piece of work . . . which in the past has been supported by private funds; the other, a study to work out better methods of admission of children into institutions. The Council had been so vividly aware of these needs that they were obviously puzzled at the fact that the Budget Committee did not appreciate that these pieces of work were of extreme value. On the other hand, to the Budget Committee this was new. The [first] situation had never come to their attention nor had the poor methods of admission to institutions. Their own duties had so demanded their time that they had not realized that children are being admitted into institutions who unquestionably would be far better off if they were kept with their family and the family subsidized or entirely supported by one of the relief agencies. In other instances, the child would be better off under foster-home protection. Had these needs developed in social planning of which the Budget Committee was an integral part, there would have been a thorough understanding and it is quite likely that the two pieces of work would have been supported. Coming as they did out of a clear sky and in the face of many other needed pieces of work with which the Budget Committee was more familiar, these pressing needs were not appreciated and this work was disapproved.

Undoubtedly the situation reflected in the foregoing excerpts is extreme. In most communities integration of activity between chest and council would certainly have proceeded far beyond the elementary level revealed in this report. Nevertheless, the problem of relationships is serious. Some communities have attempted to solve the problem by combining the chest and council under a single governing board. This arrangement, however, does not necessarily produce satisfactory results. In fact, a good case can be made for separation of the financing and planning functions. Successful financing almost invariably implies control by the moneyed groups in the community. Successful planning likewise usually implies that a dominant position has been accorded to a particular group—namely, those who have intimate knowledge of the community's social problems and social resources. If both functions are controlled by one board, one aspect or the other is likely to receive major emphasis; and experience suggests that the financial point of view is the one that is likely to become dominant. Various other structural arrangements have also been adopted in an effort to bring planning and financing into a constructive relationship with one another. In some cities a certain proportion of the members of the board of

the chest are nominated by the council, and, in turn, the chest nominates a certain number of individuals to serve on the board of the council. These interlocking directorates presumably provide continuous contact and communication between the two organizations. Joint staff and joint office facilities have likewise been arranged in some places as an additional means of co-ordinating activities. Under such an arrangement there is always a danger, however, that planning activities may languish for a considerable period each year when the exigencies of the chest campaign absorb the time and energies of the entire office staff.

Undoubtedly these various expedients for correlating financing with social planning spring both from original differences in chest and council structure and from differences in belief as to what each should accomplish. In some cities the council antedated the chest, and joint financing was introduced by the council to serve those of its member-agencies that wished to participate. Under this plan, authority originally emanated from the agencies, which, through their council, created the chest. In other places, chests were formed by donors, sometimes in advance of, and sometimes subsequent to, the formation of a council. Chests thus organized were sometimes self-perpetuating bodies and assumed complete responsibility for selecting new directors to fill vacancies on their boards. Often they relied upon the council to conduct the budget hearings but reserved the right to veto the council's budgetary recommendations. Where joint financing originated in this way, the chest was not the creation of the agencies but was an independent body, sometimes with little or no organic relationship either to the council or to the agencies.

In the early period of chest development, it was widely believed that chests should not be organized until after the agencies had enjoyed several years of experience in working together in councils. Some of the leaders in the chest movement later changed their minds on this question and came to the conclusion that chests should precede councils or that the two should start simultaneously. This view was based on an observation of the activities of councils in nonchest cities. These councils, they thought, experienced greater difficulty in getting the agencies to work together effectively than did the councils in cities where most of the private agencies were held together by their joint concern for the success of federated financing. In other words, participation in joint financing was believed to provide a cohesive factor for which no adequate substitute had been found in nonchest cities. This opinion appears not to be fully substantiated by the experiences of some of the large cities, such as New York City, Chi-

cago, and Boston, where councils were able to achieve some significant gains in the long period preceding the adoption of federated financing in those cities. In small cities, however, it was often true that councils had great difficulty even in surviving prior to the organization of the chest. Thus the early history of joint planning and joint financing in many cities accounts for the particular pattern of relationships that has persisted to the present. There is enough variation in these patterns to suggest that no structural or organizational scheme is a guaranty of successful integration of effort. Of greater importance, apparently, than structure, is the establishment of a tradition among the leaders in the community that the chest and the council must work in close co-operation with one another and that each must scrupulously respect the functions and prerogatives of the other.

#### THE PROBLEM OF COUNCIL STRUCTURE

In recent years a good many pointed questions have been raised about the structure of councils. Most councils are delegate bodies—that is, each member-agency appoints two or more representatives to serve on the central governing body of the council. As a rule, the executive and the president, or some other member of the board, are selected by the agency to fill these positions. In addition, the central body may include a certain number of elected individuals. These individuals do not represent specific agencies; they may, presumably, represent the public at large, or they may be selected because of known interest in and knowledge of social welfare problems. In cities where there are large numbers of agencies, the central body is thus very large, consisting, often, of several hundred delegates. These delegates usually elect a small executive committee to carry out the actual task of governing the council. In addition, the delegates are usually members of one or more of the council's divisions. Thus the delegates from a hospital would presumably be members not only of the council's central body but also of its health division. The members of each division also usually elect an executive committee to administer the affairs of the division.

The foregoing description represents an attempt to generalize. Obviously, variations from this pattern occur in many councils. That councils are, in general, organized along the lines indicated is evident, however, from the two complaints most frequently voiced concerning their structure: (1) that the central body is too large and unwieldy; and (2) that the delegate basis of representation results in an unwarranted preponderance of the private agency point of view.

If a council includes two hundred or more agencies in its membership, the central body will ordinarily consist of at least four hundred delegates. A group of that size cannot function effectively as a governing body. In fact, it is little better than an assembly and is forced, by practical necessity, to delegate its powers to a smaller body. This means that the staff of the council faces the problem of trying to bring these four hundred people into some kind of meaningful relationship to the council's program. If the delegates are in touch with the council only through attendance at the occasional assemblages of the large central body, they can scarcely be expected to be effective participants. Hence ways must be found to provide special jobs for them. Most large councils have found this a very baffling task. There is a limit to the number of committees and study groups the council staff can serve. After that point is reached, the organization of additional groups is wasteful and can even be destructive. As a result, some councils have come to believe that there is no practical way in which all, or even a substantial majority, of the delegates can be brought into frequent direct contact with the council's program. This conclusion has, in turn, induced a conviction that the delegate basis of council structure should be changed. It has been suggested that a way should be found to obtain representation on the council of the various fields of social work in lieu of representation from every individual agency. This proposal, however, presents important difficulties. Chief of these is the question of whether there is sufficient unity among the agencies in a given field of work, such as child welfare, to justify the assumption that the agencies in the field would be satisfied with a broad type of functional representation. Some observers believe that the entire concept of representation may be untenable. It has been suggested that a better arrangement would be to copy the structure of some functional agencies. This would involve election of a small governing board by the members, with emphasis placed upon selection of persons qualified by experience to assist in the development of the program. One of the duties of this governing body would then be to enlist participation from as many of the member-agencies as the resources of the council would permit.

So long as the delegate basis is retained, it is clear that in most communities the public agency point of view will be underrepresented. Although the public agencies usually spend more money and serve more clients than all the private agencies combined, this work is ordinarily carried on through a relatively small number of administrative units. Private social work, on the contrary, tends to be highly segmented. Many of

the agencies, even in large cities, operate on budgets of less than \$10,000 per year. The practical effect of this situation is that a day nursery, serving an average of forty children on a budget of \$10,000 or less, would have the same representation in the council as the department of public home relief, with a case load of thousands of families and an annual expenditure of several million dollars. As a result, the number of delegates from private agencies is usually several times as large as the total number from the public agencies.

Table 5 throws light on this situation. As the table indicates, three-fourths of the private agencies in New York City operated, in 1934, on budgets of less than \$50,000. A similar pattern prevails in many other

TABLE 5\*  
BUDGETS OF PRIVATE SOCIAL AGENCIES†  
IN NEW YORK CITY, 1934

Budget	Per Cent of Agencies
Less than \$15,000.....	43
\$15,000, less than \$50,000.....	33
\$50,000, less than \$100,000.....	9
\$100,000 or over.....	15

\* Data taken from Neva R. Deardorff, "Planning the Welfare Program," *Survey*, LXXII (September, 1936), 263.

† There are 730 private social agencies in New York City requiring financing, aside from hospitals and clinics.

cities. Usually comparatively few of the private agencies have sizable budgets, and the majority operate small programs and spend very limited amounts of money. The importance of an agency's contribution is not necessarily determined, of course, by the volume of its expenditures. Nevertheless, it is clear that, under existing schemes of representation, these numerous small agencies are in a position to exercise a disproportionate influence in council affairs. This possibility is checked in some degree, however, by a countervailing factor. Agencies with small budgets necessarily employ small staffs, and many of them operate their programs with only one or two professional employees. This means that a considerable number of these agencies do not have the time to participate extensively in the council program. As a result, it often happens that the small agencies are relatively inactive and the dominant role is played by large agencies in which the executive, by delegating many of his obligations to subordinates, can find time to work on community-wide problems.

This problem has been frequently discussed at state and national conferences of social work, and a number of interesting remedies have been suggested. Among these is the proposal that a scheme of proportional representation be adopted.<sup>31</sup> Under this plan the number of an agency's representatives on the council would be determined, in the first instance, by the size of its annual budget. Thus, a public department expending several million dollars would be entitled to a larger number of delegates than a small agency with a diminutive annual budget. It is apparent, however, that this basis of representation would have to be modified to some extent to compensate for other inequities the plan would involve. For example, a home for the aged, with an annual budget of \$100,000, may have much less to contribute to a program of social planning than a child guidance clinic which spends only \$25,000 per year. Hence a second element in the proposal is that the agency's representation be weighted by the size of its professional staff. Since a majority of the employees of a home for the aged would be nonprofessional workers, such an agency might, in the end, have fewer delegates than a smaller agency staffed mainly by professionals. Further equalization might be introduced by according delegates to the large agencies on the basis of departmental and geographical representation. Thus a public welfare department with a child welfare division, a family welfare division, and a legal aid bureau would be entitled to delegates from each of these departments. In addition, large districted agencies, both public and private, might be accorded delegates to represent each of the district offices.

The foregoing proposal would doubtless prove to be somewhat complicated if actually put into operation. Moreover, a question can be raised as to whether the reform really needed is a different basis of representation. Equitable representation is undoubtedly necessary in any organization that wields power. Whether any council wields power, in the usual sense of that term, may be questioned. Councils rely, in the main, upon educational efforts to advance their objectives. Hence the wider the contacts of the council, the greater its opportunity to influence attitudes and practices. In many cases the representatives of a very small agency may prove to be more effective interpreters of social problems in the community than a more numerous group of delegates from a large organization. Any radical change in the structure of our present councils should probably be in the direction of increasing the representation of public agencies rather

<sup>31</sup> See Pierce Atwater, "The County as a Unit for Coordinate Planning and Research in Public and Private Social Work," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*, 1937, pp. 369-77.

than of decreasing the delegations of private agencies. Such a reform, however, might further complicate the problem of some councils by producing a structure even more unwieldy in size than the present delegate organization.

#### IS A NEW TYPE OF LOCAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION NEEDED?

Perhaps ultimately a new form of planning organization will be needed in the field of social welfare to supplant the present councils. Certainly, a realistic evaluation of councils suggests that they have been predominantly serviceable in influencing developments in the field of private social work. Although public agencies belong to the council in many communities, their participation has often been of a perfunctory character. In the early days of the council movement, some social workers believed that membership in the council should be limited to private agencies and that one function of the organization should be to exercise pressure upon the public social services in an effort to improve their quality. This point of view soon disappeared, however, and there has been for many years a sincere effort to induce public agencies to co-operate in council activities on the basis of full and equal partnership. In spite of this attitude, however, the participation of public agencies in a good many councils has been exceedingly limited.<sup>32</sup> The extent to which public agency programs have been influenced by council activity has also been disappointing. Moreover, it is difficult to believe that any nonofficial body can hope to exert continuous and effective influence on public agency programs. The public agencies are ordinarily less flexible and enjoy less latitude than the private agencies. Their activities are prescribed by law, and major changes in their policies and practices, therefore, usually require either legislative action or, in some instances, the exercise of executive discretion on the part of an elected official. Consequently, the extent to which their employed administrative officials and local governing boards can follow council recommendations is rather strictly limited.

There is a possibility that planning and co-ordination in the social welfare field may ultimately become an official function of government. It is clear that the state has the power to regulate the welfare services that are authorized by law and supported by taxes. It is also clear not only that all governmental services should be administered as productively as possible

<sup>32</sup> Where public agencies are active in council affairs, it is usually the executives who participate rather than members of the governing body (i.e., city councilmen or county commissioners). This is an important shortcoming. Members of governing bodies of private agencies are often no less active than staff members in helping to develop the council program.



but also that planning has become an accepted objective in most fields of public administration. Hence it is not impossible that a day will come when government will assume responsibility for co-ordinating the various services it supports and will undertake a program of advance planning to insure their orderly development.

At present there are many communities in which public social services are not well co-ordinated. Sometimes these services are administered by the same unit of government and sometimes by different local units, such as the county and city. In one urban center, poor relief was for many years a responsibility of the county government. In that same community the city government supported a very extensive tuberculosis program. Since a great majority of the county taxpayers lived in the city, both services were supported by substantially the same group of citizens. Moreover, it was well known that many relief cases were also currently under the care of the tuberculosis service. Undoubtedly, the treatment of these families would have been much more effective if the two organizations had been in close touch with each other. But, as a matter of fact, there was no orderly provision for exchange of information and experience. One of the two agencies did not even register its cases at the social service exchange. Hence co-ordination of treatment occurred only in cases in which the responsible workers cleared with one another on an informal and unofficial basis. Obviously, the resulting loss to the families and to the community was considerable. The great expansion in the public social services in recent years has multiplied the opportunities for this type of isolation of one program from others. A general recognition of the interrelatedness of the various types of public welfare services would perhaps create a demand for some kind of official means of co-ordinating them. There is some basis for believing that a development of this character may ultimately occur.

#### AN EXPERIMENT IN THE GERMAN REPUBLIC

Document 13-F sets forth some of the pertinent provisions of the German National Child Welfare Law of July 9, 1922, enacted during the period of the Republic. Section 6 of this statute definitely fixes responsibility upon the public child welfare agency to seek co-ordination of all child welfare organizations, both public and private. As a means of furthering this objective, provision is made for selection of two-fifths of the members of the governing board by the private agencies in the field. Thus the intent of the law was not to inhibit the expression of altruistic impulses on the part of private citizens and private societies but rather to provide for a co-ordination of these activities with one another and with the official

program of the local government. Similarly, the supervisory agency at the state level is charged (Sec. 13) with "the setting of standards for the private agencies and the giving of assistance and encouragement to private agencies in order to promote their systematic co-operation with one another and with the local official child welfare agencies." Thus the statute gives official recognition to the necessity of providing for co-operation and co-ordination at both the operating and the supervisory levels and imposes responsibility for attaining these objectives upon the official public agency.

#### AN ENGLISH PROPOSAL

Proposals to promote co-ordination of welfare services by means of statutory provisions have likewise been considered in England. Document 13-G sets forth certain recommendations of the *Majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws* (1909). Although the proposals set forth in these sections were not adopted by Parliament, it is significant that an official commission was seeking, among other objectives, to impose upon government the responsibility for promoting co-operation and joint planning in the welfare field. The plan specifically states that the duties of the proposed Voluntary Aid Council would be "for the most part not executive, but supervisory." One of its duties would be to maintain, as far as possible, "the same principles of help and relief throughout the County or County Boroughs"—in other words, to seek, as voluntary councils now do in American cities, to reduce disparities in the quality and amount of care offered to persons with similar needs and with equal claims upon the community. Another function proposed for the Voluntary Aid Council was the promotion of "any voluntary institutions, associations, or societies for which the County, as a whole, has need." Thus the intention was that the council should study local needs and should promote the development of resources to meet those needs. Here again the contemplated program resembles one of the well-recognized functions of councils of social agencies in American cities. The Voluntary Aid Councils proposed by the Royal Commission were to include representatives of both public and private agencies (Recommendation 173), as well as certain other interested laymen, such as "clergy and ministers." Thus the composition of these bodies was to be similar to that of many councils now operating in the United States. In addition, the Voluntary Aid Councils were to perform functions not usually encountered in councils of social agencies. For example, "they would allocate funds to poor districts." Nevertheless, the entire scheme appears to rest upon two convictions:

(1) that there is need for some definite provision to effect co-ordination of welfare services and to carry on social planning; and (2) that it would be desirable to fix these responsibilities upon a body authorized by statute.

#### AN EXPERIMENT IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

In this country an interesting experiment in social planning under official auspices was inaugurated by the state of Washington<sup>33</sup> in 1937. The legislature provided for the appointment of an advisory committee in each county. The functions of these committees were prescribed as follows: "These Advisory Committees shall make such studies of local conditions in the field of social security as will enable them to make recommendations relative to improvements in general living conditions and in the administration of public assistance to the end that there will be a lessening of the need of public assistance in that county." The members of each committee were to be appointed by the county commissioners for two-year terms and were to serve without pay except for travel expenses. The county commissioners were also authorized to approve budgets for the advisory committees. Hence it was possible for the committees to employ research secretaries. Thus the Washington committees were intended to be bona fide social-planning bodies, operating by statutory authorization and supported by public funds.

This experiment in Washington did not turn out, however, to be an unqualified success. Boards of county commissioners actually appointed advisory committees in all but two of the counties. Usually these committees had from five to nine members. Paid secretaries were employed in about one-third of the counties, mainly in the more populous ones. Except in a few of the largest counties, however, the paid secretaries were not well-qualified research workers. Hence the advisory committees, lacking expert professional guidance, were in many cases very unclear as to their purposes and functions. The record suggests that some of them thought their job was to defend the public welfare program from criticism through a program of interpretation and publicity. In some instances this publicity tended to take on a political cast. In rural counties, particularly, there was often a very hazy conception of what a research and planning program involved. In such communities the advisory committee sometimes became a kind of buffer between the county commissioners and the public, shielding the former as far as possible from criticism by the latter.

The experience in the more populous counties was considerably more promising. These counties employed qualified workers and initiated a

<sup>33</sup> Chap. 180, Sec. 11, Session Laws, State of Washington, 1937.

number of important pieces of research. The King County Advisory Committee (Seattle), for example, undertook the following investigations: survey of a community of garbage-dump scavengers; study of two private agencies that applied for county subsidies; study of intake procedures in the county welfare department; survey of facilities for homeless men; study of "job refusals" by persons to whom domestic employment was offered. The range of the problems toward which these investigations were directed suggests that there were genuine potentialities in the Washington plan.

Unfortunately, the Washington advisory committees were short-lived. The 1937 "recession" in business occasioned sharp cuts in the welfare program. Budgets of the advisory committees were subjected to great pressure, with the result that paid secretaries were dropped in all but the two largest counties. Even in these two counties, after a further period of experimentation, the salaried workers were discontinued. Since that time the advisory committees have been permitted to lapse pretty generally throughout the entire state. It is very unfortunate that this experiment did not continue. The scheme was in operation such a short time that no adequate evaluation is possible. The biennial report of the State Department of Social Security of the State of Washington for the period ending March 31, 1939, contains a brief statement relative to the work of the advisory committees, appended hereto as Document 13-H. Although this statement is in no sense evaluative, it includes a list of studies completed by the committees. This list, covering only the first year of operation, suggests that in many of the counties problems were studied that might otherwise have received little or no public consideration.

Although no definite conclusions can be derived from the brief experiment with advisory committees in the state of Washington, at least two interesting questions have been thrown into clear relief by the experience: (1) Is it sound to divorce social planning completely from administration? (2) Is the county an appropriate unit for the conduct of research programs?

Although the advisory committees in Washington were appointed and financed by the county commissioners, they had no organic connection with the administration of the public social services. Thus they lacked firsthand experience with the problems toward which their research should presumably be directed. In populous counties, where there is an abundance of leadership to draw upon, it is perhaps not difficult to attract competent local citizens in sufficient numbers to man both an administrative agency and a separate research agency. In rural communities, leadership and ex-

perience are likely to be at a premium. Certainly in many sparsely populated counties it would be difficult to find an adequate number of competent and experienced lay leaders to fill the positions on both the administrative board and the advisory committee.<sup>34</sup> The alternative, in such counties, would be to combine the administrative and planning functions under a single board. This arrangement would be subject to the criticism that the board responsible for the administration of the public social services would not be likely, in its planning activities, to discover faults in its own programs. Undoubtedly, there is merit in this criticism, and, for that reason, there may be advantages in separate boards for administration and for planning in the populous communities. It is a real question, however, whether, in rural communities, this division of function is expedient. Defects in local administration are presumably subject to correction by the field representatives operating under the state department of social welfare. Hence, even though local research ignored these defects, they would not necessarily remain undetected. The great merit of combining responsibility for administration and for research in rural counties is that the local board is then likely to approach its planning activities with some knowledge of the problems that require attention. In other words, community organization as the secondary activity of an informed local board would seem to offer a more promising outlook in most rural counties than could be provided by a separate group that sought to make community organization its sole responsibility.

It is widely agreed that in most sections of the United States the county is the most satisfactory unit for the administration of the local public social services. This does not necessarily mean, however, that every county should likewise be served by an independent local research unit. In many of the states there are scores of small counties that are very similar to one another in a great many respects. In such states it is not necessary to conduct studies in every county in order to identify problems that are common to many of them. Data from a representative group of counties may, in such instances, be sufficient. In any event, most counties would certainly not be able to attract qualified research workers, and to impose a research program upon them would therefore mean that a majority would doubtless try to conform but that the results achieved would, in many cases, be of little or no significance. Perhaps a sounder development would be to enlarge the research facilities of the state department. If an ade-

<sup>34</sup> In Washington the elected county commissioners administered the program. In some states, however, the administration of the service program is intrusted to unpaid boards of lay citizens.

quate staff were available, studies might be launched periodically in the different counties of the state under the direction of the state department and with the guidance and advice of a local committee. An arrangement of this character would almost certainly insure a better quality of research personnel and would also reduce duplication of effort by instituting in the various counties studies that contributed not only to a solution of local problems but also to improved understanding of state-wide needs.

#### EXPERIMENTS INITIATED BY FEDERAL AGENCIES

Developments at the federal level have in recent years given impetus to the belief that planning and co-ordination in the welfare field may ultimately become a recognized and standardized function of government. The work of the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities appointed in August, 1935, is sometimes cited as an evidence of this trend. This committee undertook an extensive assignment of research and fact-finding. On the basis of its investigations it developed plans for comprehensive social programs, particularly in the field of health. These proposals were extensively publicized through speeches, radio addresses, conferences, and printed reports. Bills were prepared for consideration by Congress. In short, planning was accompanied by efforts to arouse public opinion and to obtain favorable action upon the committee's recommendations. In the past, specific problems have often been investigated by official commissions, but the members have usually been prominent laymen. It was significant that the Interdepartmental Committee was made up of individuals responsible for the administration of important governmental services. In other words, an outworn tradition that objectivity can be achieved only by persons in detached positions was abandoned, and planning was undertaken by government itself, operating through a selected group of its experienced executives.<sup>35</sup>

More recently, since the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, numerous co-ordinating and planning committees have been established by government. The director of each regional office of the Social Security Board, to cite a single illustration, was made responsible for the work of a committee composed of the various regional representatives of federal agencies operating in his district. The purpose of these regional committees was to

<sup>35</sup> The personnel of this committee included: Josephine Roche, assistant secretary of the Treasury, chairman; Arthur J. Altmeyer, chairman of the Social Security Board; Oscar L. Chapman, assistant secretary of the Interior; Charles V. McLaughlin, assistant secretary of Labor; Milburn L. Wilson, undersecretary of Agriculture; Thomas Parran, surgeon-general, Public Health Service; Aubrey Williams, deputy administrator, Works Progress Administration.

promote co-ordination of services within the region and to develop plans to meet the needs created by the national emergency. These and numerous other committees are engaged in activities at the federal and regional levels which, at the local level, have commonly been intrusted to councils of social agencies. Whether planning at the local level will also become increasingly a function of public agencies is by no means clear. If such a development should come about, it might result from either executive or legislative action. The normal sequence doubtless would be for governors and mayors to make increasing use of departmental and interdepartmental committees in the study of specific problems and for legislatures to adopt subsequently some plan for continuing this policy in terms of specific appropriations and specific assignments of duties.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

Another problem widely discussed in recent years relates to the development of social-planning activities at the neighborhood level. This problem has manifested itself mainly in large cities. Some experts in community organization take the view that social planning on a neighborhood basis should be encouraged. Document 13-J sets forth a scheme for stimulating neighborhood planning in New York City. This scheme differs from many that have been suggested in recommending an organic relationship at the neighborhood level between social planning and financing. Differences in needs and in fund-raising capacity are to be adjusted, under this plan, by a system of grants from a central city-wide fund. Although the proposal has never been adopted, either in New York City or elsewhere, it merits careful study. It envisages much more widespread and more democratic participation in policy-making and planning than any community has thus far been able to achieve.

The experience in some of the large cities suggests that neighborhood planning is certain to develop, whether it is stimulated or not. Most of the districted agencies have an abundance of evidence on this point. Periodically the district offices are approached by groups from the area they serve with a request for assistance in organizing some kind of local welfare council. Or the councils may spring up spontaneously with little or no guidance from social work groups. In some cases these neighborhood councils may be composed exclusively of interested local individuals. In other instances some kind of delegate body may be organized, with representatives from each of the social and health agencies operating in the area. Some of these groups are organized in a burst of enthusiasm and expire with equal rapidity. Others have had a continuous existence over a con-

siderable period of years. Many of them operate on an informal basis without a budget. Others obtain funds to carry on some kind of program either from dues or from contributions or, in some cases, from allocations granted by the central community fund. Programs vary greatly in scope and character. Some neighborhood councils merely provide a means of promoting acquaintanceship among local agencies and local individuals by holding periodic dinner meetings, at which problems of common interest are discussed. Others attempt to study neighborhood needs, usually through committees, and to take steps to improve neighborhood conditions. Typical undertakings of neighborhood councils would be (1) an attempt to obtain local enforcement of laws relating to the excluding of boys from pool-rooms and taverns; (2) an effort to improve facilities for collection of garbage; (3) a drive to obtain new equipment for local playgrounds; (4) a protest against the quality of supervision provided in public dance halls.

Wherever neighborhood councils spring up, a problem is likely to arise as to the co-ordination of neighborhood planning with city-wide planning. Many of the problems with which neighborhood councils concern themselves relate to matters of a local character, such, for example, as the protection of school children from a traffic hazard. But in other instances these councils become interested in problems which are actually city-wide in scope. Bad housing, for example, usually exists in a number of neighborhoods. In large cities a number of different organizations are likely to be working on this problem. Hence it is not effective for a neighborhood group to work independently on housing if there are other important groups with which it might correlate its efforts. In fact, unless there is some kind of co-ordination, various groups may find themselves approaching the same officials with the same objectives in view but with different suggestions for attaining those objectives. If the officials chance to be indifferent or hostile toward housing, this provides them with an opportunity to play one group off against another.

In a few cities arrangements have been made to relate neighborhood planning to city-wide planning. A few city-wide councils of social agencies have taken the initiative in this matter, either by offering their services to neighborhood councils already in existence or by undertaking to organize such councils. In 1940 there were thirteen neighborhood councils affiliated with the central council in New York City, six of which were staffed jointly by the central body and the local associations.<sup>36</sup> In smaller cities, neighborhood councils are likely to bear a relationship to the central

<sup>36</sup> Kathryn Farra, "Neighborhood Councils," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*, 1940, p. 454.



council similar to that of the functional agencies—that is, the neighborhood council names delegates to the central body and participates in the activities of the central council as extensively as its time and interests dictate. A very persistent thread of belief runs far back into the history of social work that, in populous communities, concern for problems of human welfare should be organized, in the first instance, on a neighborhood basis. This belief has manifested itself in the programs of such organizations as the parish conferences of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the district committees of the Charity Organization Society, the social settlements, and the Cincinnati Social Unit Plan. In spite of these many experiences, however, very few neighborhood organizations have enjoyed the vitality and the longevity that has characterized some of the city-wide activities. In large cities, particularly, the problem of decentralizing planning and participation to the neighborhoods has not yet received an adequate solution.

A special aspect of neighborhood planning has been developed in recent years under the name of "co-ordinating councils." The first of these councils was organized in 1919 in Berkeley, California, but the major impetus has come, since 1932, from Los Angeles, where more than seventy such councils were in operation in 1941. The co-ordinating councils are, in effect, neighborhood organizations. In the beginning their purpose was to prevent delinquency, particularly among children. Subsequently some of the co-ordinating councils adopted a broader purpose and began to concern themselves with various kinds of social problems. In the main, however, prevention of delinquency continues to be the dominant concern. Although the movement has spread to some localities in the Middle West and the East, its most extensive development has been on the Pacific Coast. Critics of this development believe that it is unsound to limit a neighborhood council to the consideration of one problem. They point out that if this idea were carried to its logical conclusion, each neighborhood would be burdened with a pyramid of councils, one concerned with delinquency, another with family welfare, a third with housing, and so on. Proponents of the co-ordinating councils point out, however, that neighborhood councils are almost certain to be rather informal in character and that it is therefore better to interest them in one problem they can understand than to confuse them with a variety of issues, most of which they will be unable to attack. It has also been pointed out that social problems are so interrelated that one leads naturally into another. Thus a concern to prevent delinquency might easily be the means of introducing a neighborhood council to such questions as the inadequacy of relief, overcrowd-

ing and bad housing, unemployment, malnutrition, and the many other kindred evils so frequently found in the homes from which a large proportion of the juvenile delinquents spring. It is also true that it is easier to interest people in juvenile delinquency than in almost any other social problem. The desire to safeguard children from destructive experiences is already well developed in most adults. Since it is a sound principle of community organization to build upon already existing interests, the promoters of the co-ordinating councils, in selecting juvenile delinquency, have therefore been well advised. Time alone will tell whether these councils will be able to enlarge the understanding of the neighborhood participants by arousing concern for other equally pressing problems in the area.

#### PLANNING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Community chests and councils of social agencies are predominantly urban phenomena. In strictly rural counties there are usually only a few private agencies, all of them operating on very small budgets. Hence there is little demand either from the agencies or from the donors for joint financing. The major need in such counties is for co-ordination and social planning. Where these needs have been recognized, some attempts have been made to organize councils. Councils in rural communities are usually not delegate bodies. A council of delegates where there are so few social agencies would leave very important interests in the community unrepresented. Hence such councils are usually made up of individual leaders in the community, some of whom are, of course, identified with such social agencies as may exist.

Ordinarily, some one group must take the initiative in organizing a rural council. This may be the governing board of a private agency, such as the Red Cross, or it may be the advisory committee of the public welfare department. The governing board of a rural council is often large. Sometimes an amazing number of divisive factors exist in rural counties, and representativeness can therefore be achieved only through a governing board of considerable size. The county may include, for example, eight or ten towns and villages. Often these outlying communities resent domination by the county-seat town. Hence the towns and villages must be well represented, as well as the open country. Overrepresentation of the county-seat town must be avoided if genuine unity of action is to be achieved. Social and economic stratification is found in rural counties as well as in cities. These various strata must likewise be represented in the council. In the end the governing board may prove to be unwieldy in size, but there is often no way to avoid this handicap.

Social workers who attempt to stimulate the organization of councils in rural areas often find they have undertaken an unusually difficult task. Ordinarily the group can be held together only in case it has definite assignments to perform. Such assignments are not easy to formulate. Moreover, meetings cannot be held frequently because of the distances many of the members must travel to attend. The members ordinarily do not have the background of experience as agency board members so commonly found in urban councils. Hence there is usually an initial educational job in orienting the group to the purposes and methods of operation both of social agencies and of councils. It is not surprising, therefore, that social workers in agencies with heavy case loads have found that the investment of time required to organize and develop a council in a rural area is excessive. Doubtless, this is one reason why the mortality among rural councils has been high. At any rate, well-developed and well-established councils in rural counties are still conspicuously rare.

A belief has gradually developed among some social workers that the council pattern is not adaptable to rural conditions. This belief has stimulated discussion of means that might be adopted to achieve comparable objectives. The expansion of the public social services in the rural areas in the 1930's suggests that leadership in co-ordination and planning should perhaps be related in some way to the administration of those services. Experiments conducted in rural counties under the joint sponsorship of the United States Children's Bureau and the state departments of welfare have lent weight to this view. These experiments have related to planning and co-ordination in the field of child welfare, but the results in some counties indicate that the leadership provided by the public agency might easily be extended into other fields of interest. In general, it appears that the public agency has been able to obtain wider acceptance than any type of rural council could hope to realize. Undoubtedly the state and federal funds made available for the program of child welfare services facilitated this acceptance. A high quality of personnel was employed in this program, and that factor likewise has unquestionably had a bearing on the success of the undertaking.

The elements that have made for success in the program of child welfare services are presumably capable of expansion into the other fields of public social service. A county welfare department, if operated by qualified personnel and if supported in part by state and federal funds, should be in a position to exercise leadership in community organization. The record suggests that some have already made significant progress in this area. Document 13-C is an excerpt from the annual report of the Depart-

ment of Public Welfare of Alabama for the year ending September 30, 1939. As the quoted excerpt indicates, funds for the operation of the county departments are derived from federal, state, and local appropriations. It should also be noted that Alabama was the first state to employ qualified social workers in every county and that personnel standards there have long been very high. Perhaps this combination of factors accounts for the experiences recorded in the report. Certainly it is clear that the county departments there are successfully performing some of the functions ordinarily assigned to councils in urban communities, including interpretation, social planning, and the co-ordination of volunteer and official activities. It is not unlikely that the future of community organization activity in rural areas rests in the hands of the local departments of public welfare.

#### CONCLUSION

The community chest and the council of social agencies movements have both enjoyed a rapid and spectacular development. Both have made important contributions. Like most accepted institutions, both have now reached the period of maturity at which criticisms must be met. The chest, it is said, has reached the limit of its development and now faces a period in which its money-raising capacity will decline. The council, according to some views, has demonstrated its impotence and must give way to a new type of organization with greater power to unite planning with action. Like all forecasts, these predictions cannot immediately be disproved. Already, as has been indicated, several experiments have been tried or proposed. Others will undoubtedly be attempted in the future. It seems safe to infer, however, that so long as urban communities continue to support large numbers of private philanthropies, neither agencies nor donors will willingly return to the old system of competitive campaigns. It also appears likely that council methods of consultation will persist. Improved means of social planning and interpretation may be developed, but the need for working out common problems on a discussion basis will continue. Hence, though changes in structure are likely to occur in any dynamic society, the elements of order which the chest and council have contributed to the social welfare field will undoubtedly be conserved.

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DOCUMENT 13-A

SUCCESSIVE CHANGES IN LEGISLATIVE POLICY, COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES OF CHICAGO, 1937-44<sup>37</sup>

FEBRUARY 17, 1937

1. Questions of social legislation considered by the board of the Council shall be reduced to the principles involved, and action taken thereon shall be with respect to and in terms of these principles rather than in approval or disapproval of specific legislative bills.
2. The executive committees of the divisions of the Council shall be responsible for thorough consideration, study, findings, and recommendations with respect to the underlying principles of questions involving social legislation.
3. To carry out the foregoing provisions, 1 and 2, the following procedures are recommended:
  - a) Questions of social legislation arising within the Council organization or referred to it shall be brought to the attention of the director, who shall determine the division of the Council most concerned and assign the subject matter to the executive committee of that division for consideration. The executive committee may use the facilities of the Council, including the staff, the departments, the sections, or committees of the division and may call upon other divisions for consultation and advice for the purpose of securing the best thought with respect to the underlying principles involved.
  - b) The division executive committees to which legislative questions are assigned are authorized to formulate and present to the board of directors of the Council recommendations thereon and shall make no use of the recommendations contrary to the advice of the board.
  - c) The recommendations of the division executive committees shall be in terms of the principles which are found to be involved in the particular subject assigned to the committee rather than in approval or disapproval of specific bills.
  - d) Pursuant to a clearance with the board of directors as provided in the foregoing item (b), the recommendations, in terms of the prin-

<sup>37</sup> "Legislative Policy of the Council of Social Agencies of Chicago," as recommended by the Committee on Social Legislative Policy and approved by the Board of Directors of the Council of Social Agencies.

ciples of the legislation involved, may be transmitted to the members of the Council by the director in such a manner as to stimulate their consideration and independent action. It shall be made clear to the member-agencies that these recommendations shall be construed as the result of the best thought of the divisional group as expressed through the executive committee. The plan of procedure herein suggested is recognized as providing only for that phase of legislative consideration designed to bring the best thought of representative social work to bear upon the principles underlying social legislation and to make the results of this thinking available to members of the Council.

- e) When it seems advisable to them, the president and director of the Council may take steps in the formulation of specific legislation to carry into effect those principles which have been cleared with the board in accordance with the foregoing procedures. Any such participation by the president and director shall be of an advisory nature only and shall not be construed as representing the Council in supporting or opposing any specific legislative measure.

MARCH 18, 1942

1. The Council of Social Agencies may indorse or disapprove pending social legislation upon a two-thirds vote of the members of the board of directors present at any regular or special meeting of said board, provided the secretary shall have mailed each director written notice of said meeting and a statement of the legislation to be considered at least six days prior to said meeting.
2. The executive committees of the divisions of the Council shall be responsible for making recommendations on social legislation after thorough consideration and study.
3. To carry out the foregoing provisions, 1 and 2, the following procedures are recommended:
  - a) Questions of social legislation arising within the Council organization or referred to it shall be brought to the attention of the director. He shall determine the division of the Council most concerned and assign the subject matter to the executive committee of that division. The executive committee may use the facilities of the Council, including the staff, the departments, the sections, or committees, and may call upon other divisions for consultation and advice in order to secure the best thought on the legislation involved.



- b) The division executive committee to which a legislative question is assigned is authorized to formulate and present to the board of directors of the Council recommendations thereon. It shall make no use of the recommendations contrary to the advice of the board.
- c) The recommendations of the division executive committee may be in terms of the principles involved in the particular subject assigned to it or in approval or disapproval of specific bills.
- d) Pursuant to a clearance with the board of directors as provided in the foregoing item (b), the recommendations may be transmitted to the members of the Council by the director so as to stimulate consideration and independent action by them. It shall be made clear to the member-agencies that these recommendations reflect the best thought of a divisional group as expressed through its executive committee.
- e) The officers and the director of the Council may assist in the formulation of specific legislation and may represent the Council in supporting or opposing any pending legislative measures which have been passed upon in the way herein described.

JUNE 21, 1944

1. The Council of Social Agencies may indorse or disapprove pending social legislation upon a two-thirds vote of the members of the board of directors present at any regular or special meeting of said board, provided the secretary shall have mailed each director written notice of said meeting and a statement of the legislation to be considered at least six days prior to said meeting.
2. The executive committees of the divisions of the Council shall be responsible for making recommendations on social legislation after thorough consideration and study.
3. The board of directors of the Council may provide for the appointment of a committee on social legislation which shall be responsible for a review of all divisional executive committee legislative recommendations and for submitting its own recommendations, together with those of the division, to the board of directors of the Council.  
Under unusual circumstances, social legislation may be submitted directly to the committee on social legislation for review and for submission by it to the board of directors of the Council after agreement on such procedure by the chairman of the committee and the director of the Council.

4. To carry out the foregoing provisions (1, 2, and 3), the following procedures are recommended:
  - a) Questions of social legislation arising within the Council organization or referred to it shall be brought to the attention of the director. He shall determine the appropriate assignment of the subject matter to the executive committee of a division or to the committee on social legislation. The division executive committee or the committee on social legislation may use the facilities of the Council, including the staff, the departments, the sections, or committees, and may call upon other divisions for consultation and advice, in order to secure the best thought on the legislation involved.
  - b) The committee to which a legislative question is assigned is authorized to formulate and present recommendations thereon. The committee on social legislation shall consider legislation with an accompanying brief presenting the case for and against and shall make recommendations regarding such legislation before it is submitted by the director of the Council to members of the board of directors. Legislative recommendations shall not be used contrary to the advice of the board.
  - c) The recommendations of the division executive committee or of the committee on social legislation may be in terms of the principles involved in the particular subject assigned to it or in approval or disapproval of specific bills.
  - d) Pursuant to a clearance with the board of directors as provided in the foregoing item (b), the recommendations may be transmitted to the members of the Council by the director so as to stimulate consideration and independent action by them. It shall be made clear to the member-agencies that these recommendations reflect the best thought of a divisional group as expressed through its executive committee and/or with majority agreement by the committee on social legislation and the board of directors of the Council. Minority opinion, with specific reasons for dissenting, shall accompany recommendations of the Council whenever these are sent to member-agencies.
  - e) While the officers and the director of the Council may assist in the formulation of specific legislation and may represent the Council in supporting or opposing any pending legislative measures which have been passed upon in the way herein described, it shall be customary that the committee on social legislation shall act for the Council in supporting or opposing such legislation.

## DOCUMENT 13-B

### CHANGES IN LEGISLATIVE POLICY, WELFARE COUNCIL OF NEW YORK CITY, 1929-38<sup>38</sup>

FEBRUARY 10, 1938

#### STATEMENT OF WELFARE COUNCIL POLICY ON LEGISLATION<sup>39</sup>

- I. It is recognized that a major purpose of the Welfare Council, in respect of social legislation as in respect of other developments in the welfare and health field, is to serve as a medium of accurate information for its member-agencies and to provide a forum in which matters of common interest can be jointly discussed. The Council should therefore continue, through its sections and through any other available channels, to arrange for consideration of legislative issues and, when desirable, should communicate the results of such consideration to all its member-agencies that are interested.
- II. It is further recognized that since the last statement of Council policy on legislation was approved by the executive committee (April 9, 1929—copy follows), circumstances have so changed as to render legislation a matter of more immediate and vital concern to Council members than it was at that time. For this reason the earlier statement of policy is not adequate to meet present conditions and the following provision is made for authorized action on legislation by sections and standing committees of the Council and by the Council's executive committee:
  - A. Sections and standing committees
    1. Any section or standing committee is free to study legislative issues in a manner approved by the section or committee and advise its members, for their information, of the results of its study.
    2. Any section or standing committee is free to request its members to take such action on legislative issues as may be approved

<sup>38</sup> The Welfare Council of New York City is a council of social agencies.

<sup>39</sup> NOTE: For the purposes of this statement the term "legislation" is broadly construed—that is to say, as embracing not only measures passed on or to be passed on by a legislative body but also such matters as constitutional amendments, charter revision, and administrative decisions that affect or determine important government policies.

in a meeting of the section or committee, provided details of the vote by which such approval is reached are communicated to the members.

3. When a section or standing committee, after having studied a legislative issue, wishes to make a public statement thereon or to communicate thereon with a public official, such statement or communication should be approved by the executive committee of the Council (or by the executive director acting for the executive committee of the Council if the executive committee so authorizes).
4. The executive committee of a section or standing committee (or any other duly authorized committee thereof) is subject to the same regulations as the section or committee.

#### B. Executive committee of the Council

The executive committee of the Council is free to take such action in respect of legislation as a majority of its members present and voting may approve, provided such action is deemed not to be in conflict with or prejudicial to the purposes for which the Council was organized as stated in the Council's Certificate of Incorporation.

- C. When action is taken on legislation by any section or committee of the Council, care should be exercised to make clear what group of agencies or persons has approved the action.

APRIL 9, 1929

#### WELFARE COUNCIL'S POLICY ON LEGISLATION

On March 22, 1929, a meeting of section chairmen was held to discuss what action the sections of the Welfare Council should take in regard to legislation affecting social and health work. It was agreed that there are at least three ways in which sections of the Council may function on legislation:

1. The section may be used simply as a forum for the discussion of legislation actually introduced into the legislature, to exchange opinion concerning it, and perhaps to arrive at some conclusions as to its desirability or undesirability.
2. In addition to discussion, the section might refer legislative proposals back to the individual members of the section for their official approval, after which, if there was substantial agreement among the member-

agencies, the section might take official action by way of approval or disapproval.

3. The section, after discussion and reference back to the individual agencies, might take no further official action by way of indorsement or otherwise, leaving to each individual agency the responsibility for acting on the legislation as it saw fit and communicating its conclusions to the legislature if it desired to do so.

The following considerations affected the Council's policy:

1. Delegates to sections act in a purely representative capacity in regard to the organizations from which they are accredited. They have no official power to commit their agencies to legislative proposals without official action by those agencies.

2. If official action by sections on legislation was to be adopted as the policy of the Welfare Council, it is conceivable that different sections might adopt different attitudes with respect to a particular piece of legislation and thus the Council might seem to be divided against itself, one section being for and another against a particular piece of legislation.

3. If sections act officially on legislation, there might be the danger of seeming to coerce minorities. Would the section act upon a majority vote and thus seem to commit some of its members who were opposed to the motion, or would it act only in case of unanimous agreement?

4. So far as the initiation and promotion of legislation is concerned, there are many difficulties to be considered. Staff would be required, and the organization of a legislative service would follow. There are other state-wide agencies interested in legislation, notably the State Charities Aid Association, which also has a legislative service to keep its constituency informed as to the progress of certain welfare and health measures.

After considerable discussion, it seemed to be the consensus of opinion that the section ought of necessity to discuss legislation which was of particular concern to its members; that the section was an appropriate place for the discussion of legislative matters pro and con; and that it was probably desirable for the sections to refrain from taking official action in regard to legislative measures other than to refer back to its constituent members the discussion and the conclusions arrived at by the representative delegates. In appropriate cases, perhaps, where there was *unanimous* agreement, the section might recommend to its constituent members that they take official action and that they record such action with the legis-

lature in appropriate ways. Thus an individual agency might disagree with the conclusions of the members of the section and still not be in any wise in conflict with the section or be compromised by any action the section might have taken.

*On April 9, 1929, the executive committee approved the foregoing statement with the understanding that the policy outlined was to be tried out for an experimental period and should be subject to change as experience indicated was desirable. It was further recommended that, whenever a section desires to deviate from the procedure outlined, the matter be presented to the executive committee for consideration.*

## DOCUMENT 13-C

### EXCERPTS FROM THE *Annual Report, Department of Public Welfare, State of Alabama, 1938-39*<sup>40</sup>

A board of public welfare functions in each of the sixty-seven counties. These boards are appointed by the county finance bodies and in urban centers by county and city finance bodies. Each board consists of seven persons, two of whom must be women.

Four hundred and seventy-nine members of county boards of public welfare include lawyers, physicians, teachers, clergymen, and farmers, as well as public officials. County programs show the effect of individual experiences, leadership, and interests on the part of local boards, as revealed in the following reports from the counties:

In — County, Mrs. L. is the mainstay of the board. She has initiative, is socially minded, and is conscious of community needs and how they can best be met. She is especially interested in medical care and will be satisfied with the program only when she has been able to establish a clinic to give service to persons in the county who are not able to pay for medical services.

The — County Board of Public Welfare met eight times during the past year. An unusual amount of interest was manifested in the public assistance program. The board heartily indorsed the department's move into new quarters and plans for adding a children's worker to the staff. Board members were especially useful in interpretation to the community. The director usually has the responsibility for conducting the meeting, but the program is discussed with the chairman before each meeting.

In — County, board members accept their responsibility to interpret the program in their communities and to give suggestions, confidential reports, and constructive criticism. The board has expressed interest in expanding funds for old age assistance, in closer supervision of work projects, in group medical care, in a home or infirmary for bedridden dependent people, and in a state institution for colored feeble-minded children.

Funds for the operation of the county departments of public welfare are derived from federal, state, and local appropriations. In many rural counties the department of public welfare is a channel through which private, as well as public, funds flow. Clubs, fraternal and civic organizations, and church societies often come to the county departments for suggestions as to ways in which their funds may be spent to the best advantage. The report of the following county describes in brief the sources of local funds which are used for matching state and federal funds:

In — County private funds were raised by local organizations and were used by them upon the recommendation of the county department for hospitalization, tonsillectomies, and glasses for children. The Kiwanis Club, through their annual "County Store Project," raised funds. They were spent, upon recommendation of the director of the department, for milk, lunches, special diet, and medical care.

<sup>40</sup> For the fiscal year October 1, 1938, through September 30, 1939, pp. 28-30.

## DOCUMENT 13-D

### LETTER<sup>41</sup>

TO THE EDITOR: The development of research departments in community chests and councils has been a natural addition to the general function of federated money-raising. The early chests were organized, some of them at least, as a means of nuisance abatement. One campaign instead of many appealed to donors. The next step, logically, was an implied guaranty of sound and sensible distribution of funds. The function of social planning came as a natural development.

The proper fulfillment of these functions necessitated the collection and interpretation of facts and figures, that is to say, a social research department. But the question I raise at this point (and I am merely raising it, not whole-heartedly advocating it) is whether a research department can best serve its purpose while it remains a controlled part of a council or chest. Are my friends correct when they say that the average council is operated by the member-agencies plus a few citizens who serve as board members? Does not the council tend to develop into either a happy family group, a clique, or a group of cliques? Does not each agency fight desperately to retain its budget, with an increase if possible? Are my friends mistaken when they state that the average agency bitterly resents any facts or figures which indicate a diminishing need for its services? Do certain aggressive, persuasive executives manage to keep agencies alive which should be combined, curtailed, or possibly dissolved? In other words, does bureaucracy develop in social work as in political government, and is there just as much logrolling? Bear in mind that this does not imply dishonesty of conviction on the part of agency executives or board members.

The research department is the child of the chest and council, controlled and paid for by the very group it studies. Would it be more effective if it had its budget from a foundation, a chamber of commerce, or some other source completely independent of the chest and council? Agreeing, of course, on the importance of properly trained social research personnel and the co-operation and consent of the agencies. Would such an arrangement put the agencies more on their toes and be a surer guaranty to the public that funds are distributed efficiently? Would it inspire more confidence in the minds of the public as to the effectiveness of social work? I'm just asking.

ALBERT C. LONG

CLEVELAND, OHIO

<sup>41</sup> This letter from Albert C. Long appeared on the "Readers Write" page of the *Survey* *Midmonthly*, LXXVI, No. 4 (April, 1940), 146.



## DOCUMENT 13-E

### CONCERNING COUNCILS<sup>42</sup>

TO THE EDITOR: Discussions of community councils, as if they were a recent development and extension of councils of social agencies, are misleading. Community councils are more ancient, in fact, than councils of social agencies, and their general background and objectives are quite different. In communities where both have operated, at no time have they seemed to occupy the same field.

The community council is a modern attempt to develop the early American principle of the town meeting. Under the leadership of some alert principal of a public school or pastor of a community church or head resident of a neighborhood house, attempts are made to bring together local citizens interested in local or general civic problems for discussion and social action. In order to develop a representative attendance, various institutions and social groups are invited to send delegates. The delegate representation is usually general in character and within a few months may be forgotten entirely. Any individual who is interested may attend; any subject in which anyone is interested may be discussed.

Councils of social agencies had their beginnings in the United States about 1910. They were organized for the specific purpose of community planning for the improvement and better co-ordination of the work of social agencies. It was unfortunate that the period of the world war interfered with their normal and orderly development. The world war brought the war chests, and out of the war chests came the community chests, into the organization of which rushed hundreds of cities without previous experience or real conception of what was involved in sound community planning for social work. Even in cities where councils previously had been developed, the chest, with the power of money, soon overshadowed and dominated the council. There was a tendency for the chest to absorb the council as a mere statistical and none too qualified research bureau attached to the budgeting department. In such a position, as Arlien Johnson properly points out in her article, "Local Social Planning," in *Survey Midmonthly* of October, 1940, the council could accomplish little as a real community planning agency.

<sup>42</sup> This letter from Frank D. Loomis appeared on the "Readers Write" page of the *Survey Midmonthly*, LXXVI, No. 12 (December, 1940), 375-76. It was inspired by an article by Arlien Johnson, entitled "Local Social Planning," which appeared in the *Survey Midmonthly*, LXXVI, No. 10 (October, 1940), 291-94.

The strength of the council of social agencies as an instrument for social planning is in its independent representative character. In cities which had and which retained such councils, most of the accredited social agencies, both public and private, eventually became council members. Each agency, large or small, had two official delegates and only two—one a social worker, one a layman. Because of the wide diversity of the member-agencies, the council was compelled to make progress slowly. It had to carry agencies along with the program and not run ahead of them. Great patience was required, but because the council limited its service and its discussions to the practical problems of the agencies and to the practical needs of the community within the scope of agencies, it made real progress.

Now, says Miss Johnson, we ought to reorganize the council of social agencies after the pattern of the community council. Her first suggestion is to modify the system of delegate representation so that the public agencies may have representation more in proportion to their importance and the amount of money they spend. Under such a delegate representation, the small private agency would soon cease to have any voice at all. Only the very large private agency could make itself heard, and that would be in a very weak voice.

This plan fails to note that the representation from public agencies, must, in its nature, be wholly professional in character, since most of the public agencies have no boards of directors in the ordinary sense. In the public mind their representatives would be public payrollers seeking to bolster and enlarge their own jobs. Where, then, would be the influence of the council in molding public opinion, in developing proper standards of service, and in securing adequate support for both public and private services?

Miss Johnson would modify the method of financial support for the council. She holds that the public agencies would use it more freely if they paid more for it. But—"a subsidy from public funds would not be advisable." So it is proposed that the "boards of county commissioners, probation departments of juvenile courts, and public school boards," help to maintain the council by supplying it with professional staff. This is a method of subsidy not wholly unknown to political machines.

Such a plan might be worked, but would it work? Well, we have had some experience with that kind of setup in Illinois, and we know how it works. We used to have in Illinois a very good state Conference of Charities directed by citizens, both professional and lay. It had a lot of influence, helping to develop a state department of charities and other public

institutions and agencies, as well as private agencies. Then certain public officials, noting that public agencies were larger than private and reasoning that the state Department of Public Welfare therefore should have more control, reorganized the conference, making it little more than a bureau of the state department. They furnished the staff, they furnished the money to run it. With the character of the conference established as a public agency, the township supervisors, who administer public relief in most of Illinois, were officially authorized to spend public money in paying their expenses to the annual meeting.

A conference devoted largely to questions of improving the relief administration of township supervisors could not be very significant, and the conference was on its last legs when representative social welfare people undertook to reorganize it on the old basis. Since then, the conference has been improving.

The domination of the council of social agencies by the chest is unfortunate. Happily, however, some of the chests are beginning to realize this. The real remedy is not to fly off to some other and perhaps worse extreme but to return to the sound plan and true purpose of a council of social agencies. In order to promote this purpose adequately, the council of social agencies must be independently strong. It must not be dominated either by the chest or by the public agencies.

FRANK D. LOOMIS

CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST

DOCUMENT 13-F  
EXCERPTS FROM THE *GERMAN NATIONAL*  
*CHILD WELFARE LAW (JULY 9, 1922)*

CHAPTER I. GENERAL

SECTION 2. The agencies of public child welfare are the child welfare bureaus (Jugendämter, Landesjugendämter, and Reichsjugendamt) in so far as competence is not legally given to some other corporate body, in particular, the school.

CHAPTER II. CHILD WELFARE OFFICIALS

SEC. 6. The Jugendamt shall respect the autonomy of private agencies in the field of child welfare, shall assist and encourage their activities, and shall stimulate co-operation to the end that a systematic co-ordination of all public and private agencies in the field of child welfare and in the youth movement shall result.

SEC. 8. The highest authority in each state shall define the territorial limits within which each Jugendamt shall function.

SEC. 9. . . . The board of the Jugendamt shall consist of the executive officials of the Jugendamt and two groups of lay members: (a) two-fifths shall be appointed on the nomination of the private agencies in the field of child welfare and in the youth movement; (b) three-fifths shall be elected by the legislative body of the local government. All lay members shall be men and women thoroughly experienced in child welfare and shall be selected in such a way that various social and economic groups in the population are represented.

SEC. 11. The Jugendamt may delegate some of its responsibilities to subcommittees that include persons other than the members of the board; or to private agencies in the field of child welfare or in the youth movement; or to individual men and women thoroughly experienced in child welfare or in the youth movement. The Jugendamt shall have the right to revoke at any time any such arrangements and shall remain responsible at all times for the services it has delegated.

SEC. 12. For insuring a constant fulfilling of the duties obligatory upon the Jugendämter and for assisting in their work, Landesjugendämter shall be established.

The larger states may set up several Landesjugendämter.

Smaller states may set up a joint Landesjugendamt. The Jugendämter of a state or a part of a state may be added to the Landesjugendamt of another state. Also, a Landesjugendamt may be set up for the Jugendämter of different states or parts of states.

SEC. 13. The following are incumbent upon the Landesjugendamt: (1) the setting-up of common standards and the institution of other suitable measures to insure the effective and uniform activity of the Jugendämter in their districts; (2) the giving of advice to the Jugendämter and the dissemination of information relative to child welfare; (3) the providing of common institutions and establishments for the participating Jugendämter; (4) co-operation in the placement of minors; (5) the co-ordination of all institutions and establishments which receive and care for endangered and neglected juveniles; (6) co-operation in correctional education, as provided in Section 71; (7) the setting of standards for the private agencies and the giving of assistance and encouragement to private agencies in child welfare in order to promote their systematic co-operation with one another and with the Jugendämter; (8) the licensing and supervision of institutions for children as provided in Section 29.

Further duties may be imposed upon the Landesjugendämter by the highest authorities of the separate states.

SEC. 14. The composition of the Landesjugendamt, its methods of procedure, and its relationship to the Jugendämter shall be regulated by state law. Moreover, Section 9, sentences 1 and 2, and Section 10, sentence 1, apply, with the provision that representatives of the Jugendämter and of the state judiciary shall in particular be chosen as members of the board of the Landesjugendamt.

SEC. 15. For insuring, in so far as possible, a systematic fulfilment of the duties of the Jugendämter, the government of the Reich may, with the consent of the Reichsrat, issue executive orders.

SEC. 16. The Minister of the Reich for Home Affairs shall appoint an adviser concerning matters of child welfare. In conjunction with him, the government of the Reich shall establish the Reichsjugendamt. It shall have in its membership representatives of the Landesjugendämter. The provisions of Section 9, sentence 2, also apply.

It shall be incumbent upon the Reichsjugendamt to give assistance to efforts in the field of child welfare, to collect information in the field of child welfare, and to make this information available to the Landesjugendämter. It shall, as well, assume responsibility for the utilization of the information collected.

## DOCUMENT 13-G

### CHARITY AND VOLUNTARY AID: EXCERPTS FROM THE MAJORITY REPORT, ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS, 1909<sup>43</sup>

Our recommendations in regard to the organization of voluntary aid are as follows:

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF VOLUNTARY AID COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

173. That in the area of each public assistance authority, that is, in each county or county borough, there be formed a Voluntary Aid Council, consisting in part of trustees of endowed charities, of members of registered voluntary charities, as defined below, of some members of the public assistance authority, and of such persons as members of friendly societies and trade-associations, of clergy and ministers, and of other persons being co-opted members, as may be settled in schemes approved by the Charities Commission.

174. That a statutory obligation be imposed upon the lords lieutenants, the chairmen of county councils, the lord mayors, and mayors of county boroughs to take steps, within a given period, and after consultation with the managers of charitable societies, trustees of endowed charities, and members of the public assistance authority, for drawing up schemes in accordance with the preceding recommendation, which schemes must be submitted to the Charities Commission for approval.

175. That the Voluntary Aid Council submit to the Charities Commission proposals for the formation of voluntary aid committees to be drawn up in the form of schemes to be approved by the Commission, and that the Voluntary Aid Council under such schemes appoint as members of the voluntary aid committees persons such as those mentioned in Recommendation 173.

176. That voluntary societies and charities, as defined in Recommendation 189, be entitled to register at the Charities Commission on lines similar to those of the registration of friendly societies under the Friendly Societies Act.

177. That a registered voluntary society be entitled to nominate mem-

<sup>43</sup> *Royal Commission on the Poor Laws*, Part VII (His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1909). Reprinted from the *Parliamentary Paper* (Cmd. 4499) of Session 1909, II, 103-5.

bers of its own body for appointment to the Voluntary Aid Council and to the Voluntary Aid Committee of the district in which either its institution or any branch of its institution has an office.

178. That it is desirable that the Voluntary Aid Committee have its offices in the same building as the Committee of Public Assistance.

#### FUNCTIONS OF THE VOLUNTARY AID COUNCIL

179. The duties of the voluntary aid councils would be for the most part not executive, but supervisory. The executive work would be assigned to the voluntary aid committees. The Voluntary Aid Council would supervise the operations of these committees generally and would, as far as possible, maintain the same principles of help and relief throughout the county or county borough. They would collect funds for distribution to voluntary aid committees, and they would allocate funds to poor districts. The county is already the accepted area for many benevolent and philanthropic purposes. The local infirmary or hospital is frequently a county institution. There are county nursing associations, and the county is the recognized center in connection with various naval and military charitable associations. We propose that the Voluntary Aid Council, acting for the county, should promote any voluntary institutions, associations, or societies for which the county, as a whole, has need. Its duties would thus be important and distinctive.

. . . . .

#### THE CHARITIES COMMISSION

188. That the Charity Commission be attached to the Local Government Board, and that the commissioners and assistant commissioners, permanent or temporary, be appointed by the Local Government Board, whose president should represent it in the House of Commons.

189. That the Charity Commission be enlarged and that there be assigned to it two departments of work, the supervision of endowed charities on the lines of the Charitable Trusts Acts, and the registration of voluntary charities or societies which hold any property in land or houses by purchase or by lease-hold or are the tenants of any property under yearly or other agreements.

190. That the name of the Charity Commission be the Charities Commission.

191. That the staff of the commission be strengthened so as to fulfil all the various additional duties that may devolve upon them:

1. As a center of the registration of voluntary charities.
2. In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of voluntary aid councils and for registering such schemes.
3. In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of voluntary aid committees and for registering and supervising their administration.
4. In the scrutiny of accounts and statements relating to voluntary aid councils and committees.
5. In the supervision of other schemes; and
6. In the scrutiny of the accounts of endowed and registered charities.



## DOCUMENT 13-H

### COUNTY ADVISORY COMMITTEES<sup>44</sup>

The 39 boards of county commissioners are designated by the 1937 legislation as agents of the state Department of Social Security to determine the local causes which lead to the need for public assistance and to perform such activities as will tend to remove these causes. To this end, the county commissioners appoint advisory committees, which constitute fact-finding bodies. Such fact-finding, according to the law, shall consist of making "such studies of local conditions in the field of social security as will enable them to make recommendations relative to improvements in general living conditions and in the administration of public assistance to the end that there will be a lessening of the need of public assistance in that county."<sup>45</sup>

Many of these committees have been making studies during this biennium which have been presented, with recommendations, to the respective boards of county commissioners. Following is a list of the subjects of forty-four studies completed by advisory committees over the state during the first year of their operation:

Subject	Number	Subject	Number
Administration.....	8	Housing.....	2
Employment.....	7	Juvenile delinquency.....	2
Co-operatives.....	5	Other agencies.....	2
Medical care.....	4	Relief clients.....	2
Institutions.....	3	Transiency.....	1
Public relations.....	3	Shack colonies.....	1
Land use.....	3	Work relief.....	1

An analysis of the studies undertaken by these committees reveals the thinking of the groups as they look at the problem of public assistance from the standpoint of finding out what situation exists in their respective communities which has made such assistance necessary.

<sup>44</sup> Excerpt from *Biennial Report of the State Department of Social Security, April 1, 1937 to March 31, 1939, State of Washington*, p. 13.

<sup>45</sup> Laws of 1937, Sec. 11, c. 180.

## DOCUMENT 13-I

### SPEECH<sup>46</sup>

It seems to me that it may be worth while to look back a little and try to attain some measure of perspective from which to view the problems which immediately confront us.

We are likely to forget, perhaps, that when we entered the depression in 1929, the community chest movement was new—very new. In 1918, only seventeen years ago, there were only 7 chests, raising \$6,000,000. In 1925 there were 217, raising \$56,000,000. This very rapid rate of increase commenced to slow down by 1928, when chests had been organized in the big majority of our large cities. In that year there were 318, raising \$67,000,000. In other words, when the depression began in 1929, real experience with the chest plan was only ten years old. Less than half of the chests which were then organized were more than five years old. "Co-operative financing" was a very infant industry to be called upon to bear the full brunt of the greatest depression of modern times.

There are several other facts which it seems to me well to remember. One is that the movement toward co-operative financing was a strictly local development. It is only within the last five or six years that Community Chests and Councils, Inc., the national association, has had a staff at all commensurate with the number of chests, and it still has by far the smallest budget of any of the important national social agencies.

Again I think we must candidly admit that the primary impetus to most chests in the early days was financial. They eliminated multifarious appeals and raised more money. The contributors liked the former, and the agencies the latter. While from the beginning there was implicit a broader function than this, it was their repeatedly demonstrated ability in the field of finance which occasioned the rapid increase of chests during the first ten years of our history.

There are, of course, plenty of other things one could say about the co-operative financing before the depression, but these it seems to me are the most pertinent. It was new. National leadership was only beginning to develop. Community planning was also just beginning to gain general recognition as a complement to co-operative financing.

I am sure that if I had known in October, 1929, what was going to happen to the economic life of this country between then and January 1, 1935,

<sup>46</sup> Address of Bradley Buell, field director, Community Chests and Councils, Inc., delivered at the annual meeting of the Council of Social Agencies, San Jose, California, May 2, 1935.

I should have been very pessimistic about what was going to happen to co-operative financing and planning in social work. I would not have ventured to predict that either the idea or the machinery could have stood up under the last five years.

That, relatively at least, it has stood up now seems to me beyond dispute. The actual number of community chests has increased from 329 in 1929 to 414 in 1935. And this has been without any promotion from the national association. We have never had the time to waste in urging new communities to organize chests, and, in fact, such influence as we do exercise has been toward slowing down communities in their initial organization plans.

The tendency has been toward more co-operation and inclusiveness rather than less. Originally separate, Jewish federations in a very considerable number of the larger cities have in the last five years affiliated with either the chest or other joint financing machinery. In Chicago, where the term "chest" was for many years taboo, a chest is now in its second year; and in Boston, where the same attitude existed, a permanent organization is being set up this spring. There are only twelve cities of over 100,000 population in the country which do not today have community chests.

On the other hand, surprisingly few chests have been abandoned. Of those in the \$250,000-and-over group, there was only one, and that in 1926 after a couple of years' trial. Of those between \$100,000 and \$250,000, only one, and that also in 1926. In the \$50,000-\$100,000 group, 13 out of 90 organized have discontinued. In the very small group under \$50,000 the demise has been greater (quite properly)—47 out of 207. All these 47 were in cities of less than 25,000 population.

The straight financial record also will bear some analysis. Up through 1932, when the national income was going down, campaign income was going steadily up. In 1931, when the national income was 48 per cent less than in 1928, the campaign income was 14 per cent more; and in 1932, with the national income still farther down, campaign income was 30 per cent higher than in 1928. The years 1933 and 1934 have seen big drops from the 1932 campaign peak, and campaign income is now about 10 per cent less than in 1929. But the Bureau of Internal Revenue showed income in 1933 to be 57 per cent less than it was in 1929. It is fair to say that our campaign results in the last two years have represented a "coefficient of generosity" double that of predepression days. Moreover, with 20 per cent of the population on relief in 1934, only 12 per cent less people gave to chests than in 1929, and the preliminary analysis for last fall shows that this number was increased about 6 per cent over the previous year.

## DOCUMENT 13-J

### NOTES ON A CO-ORDINATED MONEY-RAISING SCHEME FOR VOLUNTARY SOCIAL AND HEALTH WORK IN NEW YORK CITY<sup>47</sup>

#### I. OBJECTIVES TO BE SOUGHT IN A CO-ORDINATED MONEY-RAISING SCHEME

1. That it should require (a) planning of community services as the basis for making financial plans, (b) responsible reporting with regard to the values received for money spent and in relation to a definite community plan.
2. That it should introduce elements of widespread community participation in planning, as well as in campaigning and giving.
3. That it should associate giving very closely with the living conditions of the givers and their neighbors and friends.
4. That it should dissociate giving from the employment relationships of the giver. If it is to be truly voluntary, giving should be a personal and family function, not a business function. If "giving" is not voluntary, it would be much better for it to have a legal foundation.
5. That it should contain elements which strongly safeguard standards in social work.
6. That it should bring about a better understanding of the relationships between public services and voluntary services.

#### II. AN ORGANIZATION FOR NEW YORK CITY

1. The parties to such an organization should be:
  - a) A central city equalization committee.
  - b) Thirty district committees (districts to have from 200,000 to 300,000 population).
  - c) The social agencies.

The function of the central equalization committee should be that of widespread city planning and the general sponsorship and management of the money-raising. The function of the district committees would be carrying on the intensive campaigns and helping with the

<sup>47</sup> The purpose of this statement, which was prepared by Neva R. Deardorff, assistant executive director of the Welfare Council of New York City, was to stimulate thought and discussion. The document has no official status in connection with the Welfare Council of New York City or any other organization.

city planning. The interest of the agencies should be primarily in the maintaining of quality and standards of work, experiments in methods of service, field training of social workers, and the general protection of professional social work interests.

2. Steps in setting up the organization

- a) Classification of all social agencies to be included in the scheme into two groups: (1) agencies whose work can be specifically related to the people living in one or more of the 30 districts, i.e., agencies dealing directly with persons in need, (2) agencies whose work cannot be related directly to neighborhoods and districts, i.e., agencies for central service, public education, etc.
- b) Classification of the work of the agencies in group 1, by districts of residence of clients, patients, etc., and estimation of the amount spent for these direct services in each district.
- c) The setting-up of a central equalization committee for the city. It should:
  - (1) Examine the agencies and departments of agencies whose work has no direct neighborhood connotations and decide as to their admission to the scheme and the amounts of their allotments. It should examine all other agencies to accredit them as competent participants in the social work service of the city.
  - (2) Prepare for each of the 30 districts a picture of the total personal services rendered, classified by types; compute cost of each service and the proportion of that cost met by voluntary contributions and total cost for each district borne by voluntary contributions. Straighten out with agencies that have endowment income, how they will use it toward meeting costs of current service, making experiments and demonstrations, and applying it to other uses.
  - (3) Rate each district with regard to its ability to raise in small contributions (that is, contributions of less than \$100) the amount needed for maintaining service in its district. In very poor districts this might be as low as 10 or 20 per cent. In wealthy districts with few needs and many contributors, the proportion assigned might be as high as 80 or 90 per cent. In the case of all districts, there should be some subsidy from the central equalization committee.
  - (4) Fix the total amount to be raised in large contributions by the central equalization committee. This will be made up of two

parts: (1) the amount needed for the agencies without neighborhood connotations (including any national agencies to which gifts might be made) and (2) the deficits in the district budgets, that is, the difference between the total money needed in each district and that raised by small local contributions in it. The total amount to be raised by the central equalization committee should be sought from the large contributions directly solicited for the purpose. Any large contributions raised by the district committee should be credited only to the central fund.

- (5) Allow no district committee to hold any funds. All contributions, whether large or small, should come into the central committee's treasury, which would give each district committee credit for the small contributions raised toward its quota. District committees should have money-raising and planning, but not fiscal, activities. Administrative expenses for district offices should be met by the central budget for total administrative expense.
- (6) Make all payments to agencies directly from the central committee, earmarked for the proper purposes and the various districts.
- (7) Equip each district committee with a picture of the total services rendered the previous year and other similar service statistics and information as the basis on which it would seek contributions through intensive solicitation. Other data and materials necessary for the campaign (which should be a year-round affair) should come from the central committee.
- (8) Provide organized means for the consideration of all expansions in the programs of work of a city-wide or nondistrict character. Expansions of district work should be considered by the appropriate district committee. *Any district committee should be permitted to have its services of various types expanded or to have new services, provided the district committee would raise in small contributions, in whole or in part, the additional amount necessary to buy this additional service from appropriate accredited agencies.* Any excess of the quota raised through small contributions in a district should be spent on services selected by the district committee.
- (9) *Permit no district committee to operate any service directly.* They should be permitted to secure service *only* through agen-

cies accredited by the central equalization committee. National organizations should be employed to help in the process of appraising the quality of work done.

- d) Maintaining an efficient service for securing accurate information about district and neighborhood conditions—health, delinquency, relief, etc. This would provide the basis for city-wide planning. It would enable a district committee to compare its conditions and needs with those of other districts and to compare the relative need for different types of services within its district.
- e) Permitting all social agencies direct contact with district committees to persuade them to expand services of different types thought by the agencies to be gravely needed in those districts and to confer about district conditions.
- f) Determining the service program in any district in which the district committee fails to function efficiently, intelligently, and energetically. An appraisal committee on district planning and money-raising should be provided for in the central city organization.
- g) Building up district committees by classifying persons now interested in voluntary agencies according to residence. Permit citizens to choose a district outside that of their residence in which to take a particular interest and to ally themselves with its interest. (Candidates for the House of Commons in England do not need to be residents of the district for which they stand for election.) These persons interested in particular districts must, of course, be acceptable to local district committees and must not be imposed upon them by the central city committee.

### III. COMMENTS ON THE SCHEME

1. This project cannot be inaugurated without an examination and analysis of the social welfare services of the city as a whole and district by district. It inextricably interweaves financing and planning.
2. As to the district services being rendered, this scheme would start where we are (which is doubtless pretty wild from the point of view of matching district needs with district services), but it would move in the direction of scientific planning, district by district, and for the city as a whole.
3. At the present time, as social work is organized, certain decisions in a federated financing scheme must be made which defy any scientific determination and are now usually made without any basis in reason or thoughtful consideration. The decision rests very largely on some

fortuitous circumstances of agencies of various sorts. When a district needs more of every kind of service—health, recreation, relief, etc.—no one can say with finality which should be given and which should be withheld or postponed. Moreover, it is not very sensible simply to give a flat increase (or decrease, if there must be retrenchment) to all services. The only sensible solution of that problem seems to be to let the people most concerned, in so far as they can express themselves, choose what they would have. If a district committee prefers more Boy Scout troupes or more nursing visits or more family service or what not, it would seem as though, if they were helping to support the scheme, they should be permitted to make this choice.

4. In a city the size of New York there will never be any kind of good social planning until there is a systematic scheme of decentralization, held together, balanced, and guided on the large policies by a highly influential central body. There is also needed a broad base of persons who actually know about the situation. Health administrators know that there must be decentralization of detail and co-ordination in the great cities. Social agencies must come to it sooner or later. This scheme makes the district committees amenable to the central committee through the subsidy system and at the same time gives them a measure of self-expression and of choice.
5. Underlying this scheme there is required a considerable amount of very high-grade technical work, particularly in the statistical analysis of social and financial conditions and of the social resources operating. For this there are now resources of data never before available. This technical work would have to be extremely well done, so that it would really enlighten and not confuse these committees. Every effort should be made to devise statistical tools comparable to thermometers, which represent a high degree of scientific work in their manufacture but which can be safely used by very simple minds once they are made. The social institutions of the future must come more and more to the use of indexes, of current reports, and of statistical analyses and comparisons. There is no escape if we would have any definite ideas about what is going on around us. It is, in fact, only such material as this that will enable people to think in any very efficient way about these matters.
6. It is thought that by dividing the givers into two distinct classes, large and small, a specially adapted appeal can be made. Small givers, by and large, would probably be interested in their own neighborhoods; they would tend to prefer to see their money spent close to



their homes. Big givers, by and large, should be interested in city-wide plans. They usually live in the least needy districts and would be glad to know that their contributions were flowing throughout the city to the more needy areas, in accordance with a definite plan. Incidentally, it does away with multiplicity of competing appeals.

7. This scheme would tend toward the building-up of communities within the great community comparable to the boroughs in London and the *arrondissements* in Paris, etc. It would make for neighborhood identity and probably some rivalry, but it would be competition in a field which now needs a good bit of energizing. To make groups of people compete for better health and welfare conditions is not a bad idea in itself.
8. This scheme would leave a vital and distinctive function to boards of directors of social agencies. They would be the custodians of standards of work, of efficient management of agencies, and would be concerned with experimentation—always attractive to alert minds. They would be the responsible contractors carrying out the program of the local communities and the central equalization committee. They would not be in the foolish position of agencies in some of the chest cities who are given the impossible order of meeting an undefined need with a very definite amount of money. The agencies and the committees would clearly understand that for so much money they would do so much work and no more. If more work were contracted, more money would have to be provided.
9. As district committees come to study their conditions and their resources there will be a much clearer conception than now exists as to the relationships between services supported by taxation and those by voluntary gifts.
10. A real danger to the scheme would lie in the inevitable tendency of local politicians to try to get control of the district committees. It would be the business of the central city committee and of the local citizenry interested in welfare and not in political machinations to see that politicians are not permitted to wreck the scheme. As the district committees developed real knowledge and competence, they could be a very powerful factor for the improvement of the public service.
11. This is a mechanism. It carries no automatic guaranties that it could not be abused or even wrecked by groups permitted to ruin it. It does, however, carry a certain number of internal safeguards. The central committee has to deal directly and continuously with district

committees and vice versa. The agencies have to deal with both. If any part of the machine tends to become rotten, somebody is there to know about it. By the objective testing of district health and welfare conditions and the reporting of them currently, there are basic measurements of the effectiveness of the whole business.

12. The scheme carries no provision against the loss of interest by the dilettante, whose attention in such things wanders off no matter how good they are, when he feels the need of a new sensation or thrill. It would have to be run by stable, serious-minded people, genuinely concerned with real welfare conditions and satisfied that they had had self-expression when they saw solid achievement or opportunity to work toward it.
13. The sectarian interests in social and health work could, with some thought and effort, be integrated with this scheme. This could be done through designation of gifts, through accounting for service rendered, etc. It should be clearly recognized that any cultural or sectarian group interested in the public and voluntary service accorded its people should have the right to study its problem and should be given full co-operation by the entire organization in doing so.
14. While this is by no means a simple concept, it is clear that no continuing, well-articulated, comprehensive scheme for community planning combined with money-raising in New York City is ever likely to be very simple in its machinery. In the course of time it is probable that awkward, unnecessarily complex processes would be simplified.
15. To set up such a scheme would probably require at least a year's time to do the necessary preliminary analytical work and probably a year to organize the parts of the machinery to function within the scheme, with a considerable staff engaged in both kinds of work. Some, but not all, of the analytical work would be required in advance of the organization work. Probably an eighteen or twenty months' period of preparation would be required after an actual decision to go ahead has been made.
16. Nobody can now know the relative cost of operating this scheme as compared with present money-raising and community-planning efforts. It probably would require no greater outlay and, what is more important, there would be far more to show for it in achievement.

April 2, 1934.

## DOCUMENT 13-K

### BULLETIN ON LABOR RELATIONS<sup>43</sup>

#### CO-OPERATION OF LABOR UNIONS AND WAR CHESTS

The following agreement on campaign co-operation has been reached by the National C.I.O. Committee for American and Allied War Relief, the United Nations Relief Committee of the American Federation of Labor, and Community Chests and Councils, Inc.

This co-operation covers only campaigns for both war appeals and all-time local services. The union committees were originally appointed to campaign for war appeals alone but have agreed to co-operate fully and inclusively with community and war chests when war appeals are included and when satisfactory local agreements are made.

Appeals to be covered are those approved by the National Budget Committee for War Appeals and the all-time local services included in the war chests. Both union committees have been represented on the budget committee and participated actively in its deliberations and decisions. The committees of the unions and of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., expect the recommendations of the budget committee as to scope of war appeals and proportions of appropriations to the war appeals to be followed, in general, by local chests. It should be emphasized that the national union committees were first organized in support of war appeals alone.

This campaign co-operation is agreed to with the following definite understandings and recommendations.

#### LOCAL CHEST-UNION CO-OPERATION

The following steps in local co-operation are recommended by the two national labor committees and by the Community Chests and Councils, Inc., committee:

1. There should be union representation by influential labor leaders on the chest governing board and general chest campaign and allocation committees.
2. The local committees of the United Nations Relief Committee (A.F. of L.) and the National C.I.O. Committee for American and Allied

<sup>43</sup> *On the Alert*, published by Community Chests and Councils, Inc., August 17, 1942.

War Relief should be recognized and incorporated as integral parts of the local war-chest campaign organization.

3. The contributions to chests by union members are to be separately and publicly credited as union contributions, and firm by firm. Accounting need not be by individual gifts, except where locally preferred, but by crediting to the unions a sum proportionate to union membership among the employees of each firm.

4. The rule will be that collections shall be paid directly to chests (that is, not to the local or national headquarters of the unions, as was done in the early days of the war-relief campaigns).

5. There should be strong labor subcommittees of the central campaign committees. These committees are to secure the necessary labor indorsements of the campaign and promote organization of the campaign among union members.

6. Indorsement of the campaign should be given by local central labor bodies and local unions. Labor, like all other groups, may withhold co-operation where satisfactory agreements with war chests are not reached.

7. Employee solicitation should be organized by employers and union representatives jointly. Methods and personnel for solicitation are to be agreed to, also method of pledge payments, e.g., number and spacing of deductions or collection by specially appointed collectors within the employed force. Rates for contributions are to be recommended, but all pledges must be absolutely voluntary, and care must be exercised not to secure pledges from those whose personal obligations exhaust their wages. Coercion should be prohibited.

8. Adequate notification and consultation with both company and union officials is essential to operating this plan. If difficulties develop, general campaign representatives of chests and unions should be brought in as consultants.

9. Publicity material and pledge cards used in labor solicitation should be agreed upon with the local labor representatives. This will assure recognition of the relation between local campaigns and the national war appeals of the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O.

#### NATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

1. The national budget committee in the early fall is to hear and pass on special relief projects in which labor is interested and which will be administered by recognized war appeal agencies. Appropriations for these projects are to be transmitted by local chests to the particular war appeal agencies specially designated and over and above the previous general

allocations. These projects will be passed upon by the national budget committee after prior approval by the war appeal agencies concerned and are to be passed on by each local allocation committee.

2. The national union committees and their regional representatives undertake to continue their active promotion of union-member contributions to war and local appeals. They will co-operate with local chests and unions in effecting thorough union-chest co-operation.

3. It is understood that a condition of agreement by labor is the favorable local consideration of the special projects in which labor is interested, referred to in Section 1, as well as the operating expenses involved in Section 2, after recommendation by the National Budget Committee for War Appeals. This is necessary, since the labor committees are turning over all collections to the war chests directly by the other terms of this agreement and thereby cutting themselves off from independent income in the war-chest cities.

Details of these special projects and administrative costs will be forthcoming after they have been considered by the national budget committee in the early fall. This means that in most cases local war chests whose total budgets will have been determined before early fall will have to include unallocated reserve funds sufficiently large to cover these items, as well as others to be considered at later dates. This re-emphasizes the national budget committee's recommendation that each local war chest provide an unallocated reserve of at least 20 per cent of the war appeal part of the budget.

#### GENERAL

These agreements on union-chest campaign co-operation are the result of numerous conferences between union and chest representatives, a Community Chests and Councils, Inc., board meeting, and finally a formal meeting on July 30, 1942, of the three committees of C.I.O., A.F. of L., and Community Chests and Councils, Inc.

## DOCUMENT 13-L

### ADVANCE INFORMATION ON LABOR'S WAR-RELIEF PROJECTS<sup>49</sup>

In order to advance the co-operation between labor organizations and chests (see bulletin of August 17), the executive committee of the National Budget Committee for War Appeals authorized us to send chests this advance information on the recommendations which the executive committee is making to the full committee. Final action on all these projects will be taken by the full budget committee on October 19.

The executive committee has recommended three relief programs sponsored jointly by the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O.: British War Relief, Russian War Relief, and United China Relief, respectively. Each of these programs is for \$666,000. In addition, the executive committee recommends an expense item for labor's national and regional co-operation with chests of \$250,000. This makes a total for the labor program of \$2,250,000. This should be a charge against the unallocated reserve of \$13,500,000 recommended in our report of August 11.

#### TRANSMITTAL OF CONTRIBUTIONS

The transmittal of contributions following these recommendations may be made in two ways: (1) the contributions to the Russian, British, and China relief to be made directly to them, and over and above the appropriations made heretofore. The costs of labor co-operation are to be transmitted to a board of trustees, known as the Special Labor Relief Fund, which is still to be set up. (2) A second method of transmittal would be to send both the contributions for the projects themselves and the costs of labor co-operation to the new board of trustees. The trustees would apportion the money between the labor organizations and the relief organizations according to the proportions recommended by the budget committee. The cost item is to go exclusively to the trustee board. Details will be sent on completion of the organization.

<sup>49</sup> *On the Alert*, published by Community Chests and Councils, Inc., October 6, 1942.

## SUBSTANCE OF THE LABOR RELIEF PROJECTS

<i>British:</i>		
Merchant seamen's clubs .....	\$300,000	
Homes for war orphans and bomb-shocked children .....	250,000	
Rest homes for workers in war industries .....	116,000	
Total .....		\$666,000
<i>Russian:</i>		
Equipment of schools and nurseries for homeless children .....	\$409,000	
Equipment of rehabilitation hospitals for wounded soldiers .....	257,000	
Total .....		\$666,000
<i>China:</i>		
Medical aid to soldiers .....	\$250,000	
Transfer of skilled workers from Occupied to Free China .....	216,000	
Mobile food distribution for workers on defense projects .....	200,000	
Total .....		\$666,000

These labor projects are sponsored equally by the main relief organization for each country, as well as by labor organizations in the United States.

## REGARDING QUOTAS

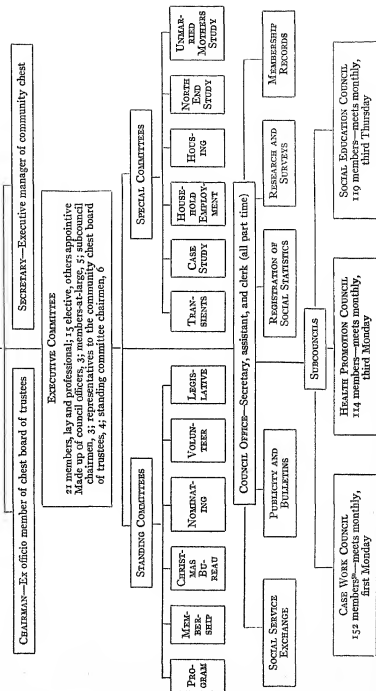
Quotas for these labor projects and expense must be figured on a very different basis from the general war-relief projects. Only cities with large and strong labor concentrations and organizations will contribute. It is estimated that such cities will be asked for quotas about two and one-half times the quota for a regular relief project. These quotas will be sent out by the labor committees themselves.

The benefit of the projects is not limited to labor. The projects are ones that will appeal to the workers. Appropriations for special projects represent only a relatively small part of labor's total contribution.

## DOCUMENT 13-M

## ORGANIZATION CHART—COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES (Est. 1921)	
1940 membership.....	355
Official delegates from 89 agencies...	204
Personal members.....	121
Agency staff members.....	30
Meets once a month.....	second Monday



<sup>1</sup>Some members belong to more than one subcommittee.



PARTICIPATION OF THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES IN  
GUIDING TRENDS IN SOCIAL PLANNING, 1921-39  
(SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS)

The accomplishments of the Council fall into three categories:

1. Projects initiated by the Council
2. Projects which the Council co-operated in instigating
3. Projects occurring through Council activities—either desirable or undesirable

First, let us enumerate the projects initiated by the Council:

- 1921 Council of Social Agencies organized and first chairman appointed  
Social Service Exchange transferred from Family Welfare Association to Council office
- 1924 Study, promotion, and agitation for a change in the city Health Department charter
- 1925 Legal Aid Society established  
Study, agitation, and promotion for change in the Board of Public Welfare charter
- 1926 Operation of Christmas and Thanksgiving Clearing House Bureau  
Conducted a survey of all children's agencies by Child Welfare League of America and completed same in 1927
- 1928 Study of dental hygiene, which resulted in the establishment of a dental clinic by the Springfield Junior League
- 1929 Establishment of a Registration of Social Service Statistics Department, which involves gathering monthly service reports from 42 agencies, 16 of which are chest agencies
- 1930 Survey of children's agencies
- 1931 Co-ordination of the transient problems centralized through the Travelers Aid Society
- 1932 Study of merger plan of the Family Welfare Association and the Jewish Social Service Bureau (Nothing resulted from this study.)  
Volunteer training courses for case work service  
Volunteer training courses for recreational activities (also 1933-34)  
Volunteer placement bureau  
Completion of the study and adoption by the boards of the Home for the Friendless and the Hampden County Children's Aid Association of resolutions to consolidate their programs for a three years' experiment (Consolidation lasted only two years.)  
Co-operation with Public Welfare Department in the development of an adequate case work staff

- 1933 Study of juvenile delinquency  
Case work volunteers' course
- 1934 Conducted a social hygiene institute, followed by resolution proposing a permanent social hygiene committee for Springfield  
Group work institute  
Study of recreational programs
- 1935 Survey of social hygiene  
Dental survey  
Study of recreational programs in Springfield and analysis of need in special sections  
Agency review
- 1936 Survey of transient problem  
Mental hygiene survey (resulted in establishment of Child Guidance Clinic of Springfield, November 22, 1938)  
Recreation institute
- 1937 Survey of transient problem and the ultimate closing of the Wayfarer's Lodge and introduction of a work program in the Cummings Memorial (Rescue Mission)
- 1938 Group work institute  
Directory of social agencies published  
Establishment, in co-operation with the state, of full-time child guidance clinic  
Completion of social hygiene survey
- 1939 Self-study survey of all community chest agencies

Second, let us consider the co-operative efforts of the Council:

- 1921 Community welfare central office established
- 1923 Larger club quarters secured by Springfield Girls' Club  
Prenatal clinic established
- 1924 Combined office quarters secured for all service agencies  
Amalgamation of Children's Aid Association and Good Will Home effected  
Girls' Club camp established  
Preventorium established  
Hospital social service established
- 1925 Hospital out-patient department established  
Boy Scout week-end camp established, with 9 troop cabins to date
- 1926 New gymnasium and swimming pool secured by Springfield Boys' Club

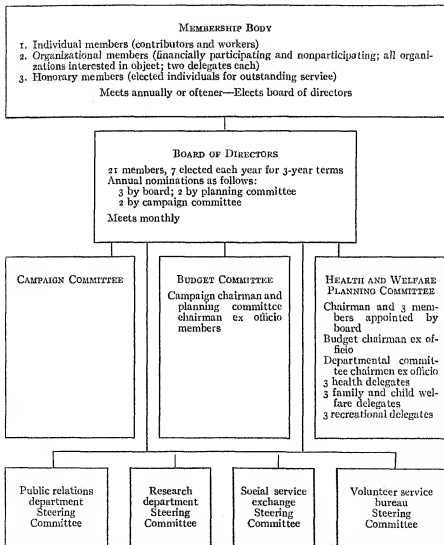
- 1929 Study of Negro social problems centralized in the Dunbar League  
Study of Negro population of Springfield and adoption of program
- 1932 Adoption of resolutions by executives of chest agencies relating to  
social workers' salaries  
Promotion of "Share Your Clothes" station, sponsored and financed by Rotary Club (also conducted in 1933, 1934, 1935)
- 1934 Study of illegitimacy
- 1936 Survey of day-nursery activities, resulting in the closing of one  
nursery and employment of competent executive half-time as  
director of the day nursery and half-time as director of the Hampden County Children's Aid Association.

Third, are projects occurring through Council activities and started in opposition to the Council point of view:

- 1928 Department for problem girls and unmarried mothers established

## DOCUMENT 13-N

### COMBINED ORGANIZATION: THE COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL<sup>51</sup>

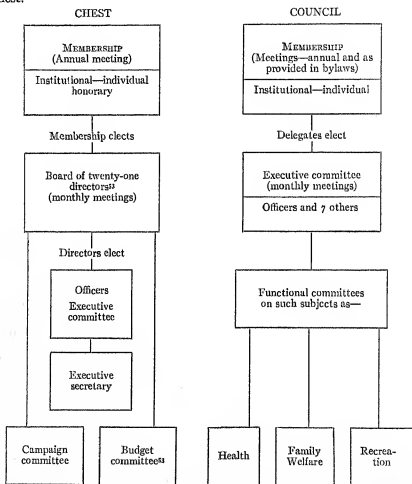


<sup>51</sup> Prepared by Lyman S. Ford, of the national staff of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., 1945.

DOCUMENT 13-O

SEPARATE ORGANIZATION: COMMUNITY  
CHEST AND COUNCIL<sup>52</sup>

This diagram shows the organization outline for a separate community chest and council of social agencies, but with the council privileged to make nominations to the board of directors and budget committee of the chest.



<sup>52</sup> Reprinted with permission of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., from *Constitution and By-laws for a Community Chest and Council of Social Agencies* (rev. ed., 1939), p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> The council of social agencies is represented in the community chest through (1) nominating 3 of the 7 directors elected annually; (2) selecting the majority of the budget committee members (the remainder, including the chairman, are selected by the community chest board of directors).

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## CHAPTER XIV

### OTHER LOCAL CO-ORDINATING GROUPS

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#### JOINT INTAKE BUREAU

**C**O-ORDINATION at the treatment level has been attempted in some communities by creating joint intake bureaus. The chief experiments with such bureaus have been initiated by case work agencies, and, ordinarily, the effort is limited to one functional field, such as child welfare or family welfare. Sometimes the joint intake bureau serves only two agencies, while in other instances, particularly in the field of child welfare, a considerable number of agencies and institutions may be included. The arrangement is purely voluntary and continues only so long as the participating agencies are satisfied with the results. A written agreement drawn up by the member-organizations provides the basis for operations. Usually there is also a formal or informal committee, with representatives from each agency concerned, to settle questions of policy as they arise.

Under ordinary circumstances every agency must have some kind of provision for sifting applications. Normally, a good many people apply each month who cannot be accepted for care because they do not qualify under the organization's intake policy. Some agencies organize special departments or bureaus to handle these problems of intake. Others place the responsibility upon a staff of first interviewers, working under a senior supervisor. In small agencies this work may be parceled out among the members of the case work staff. Whatever the arrangement may be, however, every agency is obliged to devise some means of discovering and eliminating quickly the cases it cannot undertake to serve. Ordinarily, rejected applicants, if they appear to be in need of care, are then referred to another agency. Whether the rejected applicant is accepted at the agency to which he is referred depends upon the accuracy of the referral. Most agencies try to make these referrals very carefully. However, intake policies may change frequently, and sometimes an applicant is referred to several agencies before he finds one that can accept him. One of the pur-

poses of a joint intake bureau is to reduce the number of instances in which clients are subjected to this type of experience. Another purpose, of course, is to effect economies. Since each agency must make some kind of provision to sift applications, a single joint intake bureau could presumably handle this problem for all of them at a reduced total cost.

Agencies that affiliate with a joint intake bureau are obliged to surrender a certain measure of their autonomy. Ordinarily, the agreement provides that the member-agencies will not accept cases independently. Hence new cases reach them solely through referral from the joint intake bureau, which receives, investigates, and studies all applications. Following this analysis, a decision is reached as to whether the case will be accepted. If the decision is affirmative, the case is then turned over to the agency which appears to be best equipped to provide the kind of treatment needed. In some instances a period of several days, or even weeks, may elapse before the joint intake bureau is prepared to make a definite referral. This is one of the objections to the system, for the early contacts with a client are often of basic importance in establishing promising relationships. Moreover, it is very disturbing to some clients to be obliged to adjust to a new agency and a new case worker soon after undergoing the experience of unburdening themselves for the first time to a representative of a charitable organization. For this reason some case workers believe that the disadvantages of joint intake outweigh its contributions.

An illustration will perhaps serve to indicate the way in which a joint intake bureau functions. In a certain city seven institutions and three noninstitutional agencies for children establish a joint intake service. This bureau is manned by qualified case workers and is directed by a committee composed of representatives of the participating organizations. Let us assume that application is made at one of the institutions on behalf of a Jewish orphan. Instead of undertaking to investigate the application, the institution refers the applicant to the joint intake bureau. The bureau immediately assigns the case to one of its workers for investigation and study. According to the agreement under which the bureau operates, each child is assigned, except in unusual instances, to an agency operated by the religious sect of which his parents were members. This means, in the case under consideration, that the choice is restricted to two agencies—an institution for Jewish children and a noninstitutional child-care agency. It is not always simple, however, to determine whether a given child should be assigned to an institution or to an agency that will care for the child in a foster-home. This decision must be based on a careful study of many antecedent factors. Often a considerable period of time may be re-

quired to complete this study, especially in case it is necessary to obtain information from other cities in which some of the child's relatives may be living. Let us assume, however, that the study is completed in this particular case within a period of three weeks. On the basis of the analysis made, the decision is to assign the child to the noninstitutional agency for placement in a Jewish foster-home. At that point the case is transferred to the placing agency, where efforts are immediately instituted to gain an understanding of the child and to locate a foster-home that will be suited to his needs. The child, and the adults representing him, thus find themselves at the end of three weeks in the hands of a new worker whose methods of approach may be quite different from those to which they have adjusted in their contacts with the intake bureau. Of course, numerous variants from the foregoing illustration are found in the actual field of practice. For example, the application may be so urgent that some temporary care must be provided in advance of complete investigation and study. The child may be sent in such an instance to an institution in which his immediate physical needs will be met. The institution is usually willing to accept a child on a temporary basis with the understanding that final allocation will not be made until the case study has been completed.

The problem which joint intake bureaus seek to solve is an important one. An applicant for social services often experiences great difficulty in finding his way to the agency that is prepared, under the existing division of the field, to accept his case. The experience of the past raises a real question, however, as to whether the joint intake bureau provides the best solution of this problem. Many of these bureaus have been short-lived. Although the plan sounds logical, it is evident that a good many dissatisfactions develop in the course of actual operations. At any rate, the movement to establish joint intake bureaus has neither spread nor persisted in the same way as some of the other co-ordinating devices in the field, such, for example, as the social service exchange. It may be that the ultimate solution will be found not in a joint intake service but in a reduction in the number of separate operating units, though there is as yet little evidence of such a trend.

#### CASE CONFERENCE

The case conference is another device to promote community organization at the treatment level. Two types of case conferences are in fairly wide use: (1) those shared by two or more agencies in different functional fields; (2) those shared by two or more agencies in the same functional field. In both types of conference the emphasis is upon consideration of specific



cases rather than upon discussion of general policies. The latter function is, of course, the prerogative of the council of social agencies and its sub-councils.

A specific illustration may serve to clarify the purposes and methods of a case conference in which agencies operating in different functional fields participate. Let us assume that the family of John Doe is currently receiving care from the following agencies: (1) the home relief bureau of the department of public welfare; (2) the department of hospital social service of the county hospital; (3) the probation department of the juvenile court; (4) the home service division of the local Red Cross chapter; (5) the visiting nurse association. There is no essential duplication in the work of these agencies. The home relief bureau is supplying financial aid to the family. Since Mr. Doe has recently received a diagnosis of active pulmonary tuberculosis at the county hospital, the hospital social worker is attempting to help Mrs. Doe in safeguarding the other members of the family from infection. The oldest girl, recently involved in a charge of stealing, is under the supervision of a probation officer. An eighteen-year-old son in the Army has, through the Red Cross field director in his camp, requested the local Red Cross chapter to let him know how his family is situated, since he has had no word from them in several months. The visiting nurse association calls at the home regularly to provide prenatal advice and care for Mrs. Doe. Thus all of these various services are needed in the home. They complement, rather than duplicate, one another. Nevertheless, it is clear that, with representatives of five different agencies calling in the home, some of them might give advice to the family that would conflict with the counsel offered by another worker. Moreover, in devising a plan of social treatment, it is never possible to know too much about the client. Each of these agencies undoubtedly has some facts about the family that the others have not discovered. And, even if the same facts are known, the interpretation placed upon them may vary. Obviously, considerable benefit may result from a meeting in which all the workers active in the family share their knowledge and discuss their plans of treatment.

This type of consultation has proved so effective in certain fields that it is now regarded as a routine procedure in every case. In mental hygiene clinics and in hospitals for mental disease, for example, the so-called "staffing" of a case is usually a prescribed step in diagnosis. When a case is "staffed," each specialist presents the information he has collected concerning the individual—the psychiatrist, the psychologist, the psychiatric social worker, the medical examiner, and perhaps others. On the basis of this pooling of knowledge, a diagnosis is reached and plans for treatment

are outlined. A comparable procedure in the correctional institutions in New Jersey has been widely discussed<sup>1</sup> and is said to have yielded beneficial results. Although case conferences have by no means become routine procedures in social work, the agencies that have participated in them usually agree that they are sufficiently productive to merit further development.

Responsibility for organizing case conferences among agencies in different functional fields may be assumed by the local council of social agencies. More frequently, perhaps, such conferences are informal meetings called by the agencies concerned, when and as the need arises. The personnel of the group usually changes from meeting to meeting, because the cases up for discussion involve different case workers or even different sets of agencies. If two or more agencies have a considerable number of cases in common, it may be desirable to perfect a somewhat more formal arrangement. Ordinarily one of the experienced supervisors is named chairman, in order to fix responsibility for calling meetings and for outlining the agenda. Moreover, under a permanent chairman, methods of procedure are likely to be developed that expedite the work of the conference.

Case conferences in which two or more agencies in the same functional field participate are likewise primarily concerned with the discussion of specific cases. Usually, however, each case discussed is currently active in only one of the participating organizations. Hence the primary purpose is not to pool information and to devise an integrated approach to treatment, as in the illustration given above; rather, the group serves in an advisory capacity. The purpose is to help the agency that is active in the case in reaching a decision as to the most promising plan of treatment. Naturally, in some instances, this may involve discussion of the desirability of transferring the case to another type of treatment. In such instances, therefore, the conference touches upon the problem of allocation and, to that extent, performs a function somewhat similar to that of a joint intake bureau.

A case conference of this type has been in operation for a number of years in St. Paul, Minnesota. The membership is made up of supervisors from three noninstitutional child-caring agencies (Catholic, Jewish, and nonsectarian), the public child-caring agency, the juvenile court, the legal aid bureau of the private family welfare agency, and occasional representatives from other interested agencies. Specific cases are presented at

<sup>1</sup> See Winthrop David Lane, "Parole Procedure in New Jersey," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, XXII, (September, 1931), 375-405.

each meeting by the case worker who has been handling the case. A majority of the cases relate to neglected children whose families are currently receiving aid from the county Board of Public Welfare. Often the question to decide is whether the child should or should not be removed from its own home. If the decision is that the influences in the child's own home have deteriorated beyond hope of repair, a discussion then follows as to the type of treatment to which the child should be transferred. Since the major child-caring agencies are all represented at the conference (the intake of several of the children's institutions is handled by affiliated non-institutional agencies that are members of the conference), the plan agreed upon is rather sure to be accepted by the agency to which the child is to be transferred.

A question was once raised in St. Paul as to the cost of this case conference. Ordinarily meetings absorbed one afternoon of each week. Since those who participated were chiefly workers in the higher-salary brackets, the expense, on a cost-accounting basis, was considerable. There was general agreement, however, that the results achieved were worth the cost. The removal of a child from its own home is a grave matter. Leaders in the community were convinced that such decisions should be taken only after very careful consideration by a group of the most experienced and best-qualified child welfare workers in the city. Moreover, there was reason to believe that the expenditure involved was actually an economy. A single child hastily and unwisely removed from its own home represents a very large potential expenditure either for institutional or for foster-home care. Hence the cost involved in safeguarding the community against injudicious decisions was probably more than offset by reduced expenditures for institutional and boarding-home care.

Although case conferences of this type seem particularly serviceable in the field of child welfare, they also have much to contribute in other fields. Family welfare agencies that have conducted similar case conferences usually testify that the procedure is very helpful. In the medical field, consultations among doctors relative to critical or baffling cases has long been an accepted practice. Since the case conference is an analogous procedure and since it appears to produce beneficial results wherever it receives a fair trial, its further extension and development in the field of social work seems probable.

#### COMMUNITY TRUST

Strictly speaking, the community trust is not an agency that is primarily concerned with community organization. It is included here

because some observers believe it may ultimately exercise considerable influence in that area. A primary purpose of the community trust is to circumvent the danger of control by "the dead hand" in charitable administration. The record of history reveals numerous instances in which funds left in perpetuity for a specific charitable purpose outlive their usefulness within a comparatively short time.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it is often impossible to divert these funds to other uses. For example, Girard College in Philadelphia, founded in 1831 to serve "legitimate white male orphans," has an endowment, which, in 1931, exceeded \$77,000,000. The institution and its program are antiquated in many respects, yet the trustees are obliged to continue along the lines indicated in a will written more than one hundred years ago. If the original donor were now alive, doubtless he would be glad to have this money used to support dependent children in their own homes and in foster-homes. But, as matters stand, the money can be used only as originally proposed by the donor, even though the demand for this service is not sufficient to absorb the income from the fund. Thus, as this case suggests, "the dead hand" can exercise control in charitable administration that may be wasteful and inefficient or even genuinely destructive.

A community trust provides assurance to donors that their philanthropies will be altered as time goes on to meet needs then current. This means that arrangements must be made to invest distribution committees with latitude in expending the money. It also means that provision must be made for continuity in the management and expenditure of the funds. Some gifts to community trusts may be totally unrestricted—that is, they may be spent for any purpose selected by the distribution committee. Others are for specific purposes, though the agreement commonly provides that the funds may be utilized for kindred programs if at some time it should become impossible or inadvisable to support those originally designated by the donor. In most cases, only the income is available for current use, though sometimes provision is made for spending, or for conveying permission to spend, the corpus of the gift as well as the income.

Most community trusts consist of two operating bodies, one to manage the funds and the other to spend them. Local banks and trust companies usually perform the first of these functions. Although in a few cases funds have been intrusted to a single trustee institution, the trend is toward multiple trusteeship. Participation of all responsible local banks and trust companies in the management of the funds is believed to provide the

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting summary of fifty such cases see *Community Trusts in the United States and Canada* (Trust Company Division, American Bankers Association, 1931), pp. 61-67.

soundest basis of operation. These institutions are, of course, entitled to compensation for their work. The distribution of the money is intrusted to a committee, usually called the "distribution committee" or the "governing committee." These committees vary in size from five to eleven members. As a rule, the institutions that manage the funds are entitled to appoint a minority of these members, such as two out of five. The other members are named by a variety of incumbents of positions believed to be permanent in the community, such as the chief judge of the United States district court, of the superior state court, or of the county or municipal court, the mayor, the city manager, the governor of the state, the president of the chamber of commerce, the chairman of the local community chest, the president of a local university, the attorney-general, the president of the county medical association, the president of the public library board, or persons in similar positions of public trust. The fiscal agents turn the income over each year to the distribution committee, which then selects the enterprises it considers worthy of support and allocates the available funds among them. A majority of the community trusts expend their incomes exclusively in the city in which they are located, though some include the county or the entire state, and a few are free to support worthy causes in any part of the world.

The first community trust was organized in 1914 in Cleveland. The movement spread rapidly, and, by 1940, 75 community trusts had been organized. Some, however, exist on paper only and have not yet received either gifts or bequests. The assets of the entire group were in the neighborhood of \$50,000,000 in 1940. One of the largest—the New York Community Trust—reported capital funds amounting to \$8,780,000 at the close of 1939, and annual disbursements for public causes totaling approximately \$200,000. In 1940 the Chicago Community Trust distributed \$167,591.47 among 135 agencies in Chicago and vicinity.

In general, distribution committees appear thus far to have been conservative in their policies. Few, if any, of them have been disposed to finance experimental ventures. This point of view is easy to understand. The members of the committee feel an obligation to give the revenues to programs which the original donors might have supported if they were alive to make the decision. Obviously, going programs are supported in the main by persons now living who are convinced of their value. Hence it is fair to assume that the original donors of the trust funds would likewise have recognized the merit of these programs. To give to agencies that have a considerable group of contemporary supporters is therefore a kind of insurance that the gift is meeting a currently recognized need; and dis-

tribution committees have, in general, preferred to follow rather than to lead. Some observers believe this conservatism may later yield to a more experimental attitude. This appears to have been the experience of the big foundations. Unlike the community trusts, these foundations are more interested in research, experimentation, and demonstration than in any other types of activity. Usually they operate on the theory that contemporary society should shoulder the task of caring for its own social welfare problems and that the resources of foundations should be used for financing the kinds of ventures that might not otherwise receive a trial. If community trusts do develop a comparable point of view, as some believe they may, it is clear that their work would have very important implications for those who are concerned with community organization.

In Chicago, for example, the Community Trust now distributes around \$160,000 per year among local social agencies.<sup>3</sup> The total expenditures of the private social agencies in Chicago are approximately \$38,000,000.<sup>4</sup> Since most of the Chicago agencies are obliged to raise half or more of their budgetary deficits through their own fund-raising activities, they appreciate very much the gifts received from the Community Trust. Nevertheless, the comparatively small gifts which the Community Trust can make to any one agency out of its present income do not usually loom large in the finances of the agencies. If half or less of the annual grants to welfare agencies—say, \$50,000 to \$90,000—were spent on specific pieces of research or on demonstrations, the gain to the community would probably be much greater. The agencies would regret the loss of income, but most of them could find ways to replace it. Funds for research and for demonstrations, however, are very hard to obtain. In most cities badly needed investigations are often delayed for years or may even be completely abandoned because means to finance them cannot be found. If the community trusts would finance some of these projects, they would often make a contribution to community welfare of far greater importance than they now achieve by granting comparatively small sums to a large number of agencies. Up to the present, however, there is no basis for asserting that such a development is on the way.

#### COUNTY PUBLIC WELFARE AGENCY

A majority of the county public welfare agencies in urban counties have thus far manifested comparatively little disposition to engage in communi-

<sup>3</sup> In 1943, 123 health and welfare agencies of Chicago and vicinity received \$163,272.51 from the Community Trust (*Annual Report of the Chicago Community Trust, 1943*, p. 7).

<sup>4</sup> *Social Service Year Book, Chicago, 1943* (Council of Social Agencies of Chicago), pp. 84-85.

ty organization activities. Most of them have had very heavy jobs to perform and have been content to do the best they could with the tasks immediately at hand. Moreover, in the urban counties, there is usually a council of social agencies, or some similar organization, that assumes responsibility for social planning and for attempting to co-ordinate the various service programs. The public welfare agency, which may or may not be active in council affairs, has therefore, in the main, not assumed a position of leadership in these types of advance-guard activities. The situation in rural areas, however, has been very different. The service program is often just as heavy as in urban counties, in proportion to the size of staff, yet the public agency in many rural counties has played a conspicuous role in community organization.

There is considerable variation in the structure and in the duties of county public welfare agencies. Some of them operate under elected county officials, such as the board of county commissioners. Others are directed by unpaid boards of lay citizens. Still others are controlled by the state department of welfare and have very tenuous roots in the local community. Some have one or more local advisory committees, which, though they exercise no direct power, nevertheless exert considerable influence in the formation of local policies and also help in interpreting the work of the agency to the local community. The service programs of these county agencies also differ considerably from state to state. Some may handle only one type of relief, while others may be responsible for three or four types of public assistance, for child welfare services, for almshouse admissions, and similar services.

Regardless of structure and scope of program, however, public agencies in rural counties have demonstrated under these widely varying conditions considerable capacity in community organization. The need for leadership in this area exists, and, though the demand may not be definitely articulated, it is clear that many of the rural communities expect the public agency to rise to the situation. This appears to be particularly true with respect to problems of co-ordination. Rural communities seldom support a variety of full-time programs. They do, however, engage in many sporadic services. Hence the major difficulty seldom relates to intake and division of the field; rather it is a question of helping inexperienced groups to discover a constructive means of expressing their altruistic impulses. A men's service club wants to do something for underprivileged children. Since it does not know who these children are or what they need, it turns to the county welfare bureau as the logical place to seek advice. A church society makes quilts to give to needy families. The coun-

ty welfare director is consulted, for he knows all the needy families in all parts of the county. An importunate cripple approaches a kindhearted clergyman again and again for aid. At length, in desperation, the clergyman asks the county welfare bureau what he should do. These are the kinds of problems that arise constantly in rural counties. Force of circumstance thus pushes the county welfare bureau into a position of leadership. It must respond to the need, for there is often no other resource to which puzzled individuals can turn. Although in some counties there may be one or two other agencies with full-time workers, the county welfare bureau, which is often located in the courthouse or some similar public building, enjoys the prestige of official status. Moreover, private agencies in rural areas usually experience considerable difficulty in financing their work and are therefore subject to periodic contractions of program. The public agency therefore often seems more firmly established and more stable in program. For these reasons local groups come to regard it as a permanent resource which they can consult regarding problems of social welfare.

In many states the personnel of the lay governing boards or lay advisory committees of public agencies provides assurance that problems of community organization will not be ignored. A study<sup>5</sup> made in Indiana showed that a surprising number of the members of the county welfare boards had previously been in contact with social welfare problems. A considerable number, for example, had once served on the now defunct county boards of child welfare. Others had been members of the board of their local Red Cross chapter. In addition, some were active in women's clubs, men's service clubs, church societies, and similar organizations that sometimes sponsor philanthropic activities. Thus there was a background of experience in many of the counties that was promising. The writer recently had the privilege of meeting with a large group of members of the Indiana county boards at an institute. The points of view revealed in the discussions indicated that in many of the counties there was an awareness of the responsibility of the local public agency with respect to problems of co-ordination. Some members also evinced an understanding of the need for local social planning and raised questions about the public agency's obligations in that area. In Iowa, where the state Conference of Social Work has a regional organization, the writer has had the privilege of attending some of the district meetings. Although a majority of those in attendance were employed social workers, each meeting also included some members

<sup>5</sup> Arthur W. Potts, *County Welfare Boards in Indiana* (M.A. thesis, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, 1940).



from the county boards of supervisors and the county welfare boards. Usually the elected officials participated in the discussion and revealed a good understanding of their local problems. The problem in community organization that seemed to trouble them most was "how to get the public to understand what we are trying to do." The evidence obtained from these and other similar sources<sup>6</sup> suggests that in many rural counties there is a developing leadership—partly lay and partly professional—that holds promise of making significant contributions in community organization through the medium of the local public welfare agency.

In addition to their contributions in guiding and co-ordinating local social welfare activities, the county welfare bureaus in rural areas often do an effective job of interpretation. In recent years many of these agencies have acted as local representatives of various state and federal programs. Many of them have been certifying agents for the W.P.A., have handled selection of candidates for the C.C.C., have participated in the youth program of the N.Y.A., and have distributed surplus commodities for the United States Department of Agriculture. Since all of these programs have received a great deal of national publicity over the air and in the press, the county department has in many cases automatically acquired a position of prominence locally by reason of its relationship to them. Local queries about these new services have been referred to county welfare directors. Newspapers have tried to indicate to their readers how these national activities will operate locally. Often this was accomplished by quoting members of the local welfare board or the director of the county welfare office. In some instances local clubs have devoted meetings to a description and discussion of these new programs. Thus a natural interest in new local and national developments has provided the county department with an exceptionally favorable opportunity to interpret its services. In addition, the administration of the various public programs has inevitably entailed complaints from clients and criticisms from lay citizens. The response to these complaints and criticisms has in some counties rather consistently resulted in an improved attitude toward the public services. Since local groups will not "get behind" programs they mistrust or misunderstand, these person-by-person explanations, in so far as they are successful, help to allay the hostilities that can sometimes impede the efforts of the board or of the elected officials to improve or expand the local social services.

The interpretive efforts of county bureaus have not stemmed exclusively from opportunism. Some of these agencies have been well aware of their

<sup>6</sup> See Doc. 13-C, p. 484.

obligations in this area and have made consistent efforts to promote an understanding of local problems. In one Iowa county, for example, the public agency prepared and circulated a brief mimeographed bulletin each month, describing its activities and explaining its policies. Sometimes local editors used extracts from these bulletins as spot news stories. In some communities the local public welfare department has assumed responsibility for calling meetings of interested individuals to discuss participation in traditional community ventures, such as the distribution of Thanksgiving baskets or Christmas toys. The defense and war emergency and the development of civilian defense activities has stimulated this type of effort. Publication of interesting annual reports, sometimes in inexpensive mimeographed form, has afforded further opportunity to evoke interest and to cultivate local support. In brief, many of the local public agencies have proved to be alert to the need for interpretation and, by their efforts along these lines, have provided a promising basis for further activity in community organization.

Thus one of the most interesting facts about rural public agencies in recent years is that the force of circumstance has frequently compelled them to assume responsibility for directing community organization activities. In other words, the need for co-ordination of efforts and for social planning manifests itself in various ways in these counties, and the community expects help from the local public agency in seeking a solution. This does not mean that there is a clear definition of responsibility, such as would usually be found in cities that support councils of social agencies and other co-ordinating and planning bodies. It means, rather, that generic leadership in social welfare activities is assigned by common consent to the tax-supported agency. Hence the community expects the agency to try to do what needs to be done. In all probability this aspect of rural public welfare will assume an increasingly important role as time goes on. Many of the state departments are deeply interested in social planning, and it seems probable that they will increasingly encourage county agencies to develop the community organization aspects of their work.

#### SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS

No movement in community organization has attracted more richly endowed personalities to its ranks than the social settlements. Both in this country and abroad a list of those who have been active in settlement programs includes some of the most distinguished names in modern history. Toynbee Hall, the first of the settlements, was founded in London in 1884 by Samuel Augustus Barnett. The movement quickly spread to this

country, where it soon assumed features that distinguished it from similar ventures abroad. The early leaders in this country included Jane Addams, Graham Taylor, Lillian Wald, Mary McDowell, Robert Woods, and many others, whose achievements, inspired by their settlement experiences, constitute a brilliant contribution to the development of social welfare provisions.

The settlement movement did not begin with a specific program; it was rather a philosophy and a method. In England a long struggle had ultimately produced an approximation of political democracy. But political democracy failed to produce many of the reforms its sponsors had anticipated. Striking differences in standards of living still prevailed; large segments of the population still lived in abysmal poverty; and, what was worse, gross inequality of opportunity persisted. Some children were condemned from birth to malnutrition, to early toil, to a very tenuous hold on the bare essentials of existence. A great many received little or no education. The wide differences in ideals, standards, and objectives that separated one class from another were believed to stem from and to be perpetuated by these inequalities. The sovereigns of England, it was said, ruled over two nations—the nation of the rich and the nation of the poor, and neither knew nor understood the other. Some of the leading nineteenth-century reformers believed that the gulf between these two nations must be bridged. Political democracy must be supplemented, they concluded, by cultural democracy, if members of one class were to meet and talk with members of another class. Samuel A. Barnett and his associates were among those who entertained this view. They hoped that the sharing of a cultural tradition would enable the rich and the poor to meet on a common level and, as a result, to work out ultimately a kind of society that more nearly approximated the professions of Christianity and of democracy.

This belief in the importance of cultural democracy inspired many of the early programs of the settlements. Barnett asserted that the great heritage of English literature must be made available to the people of the East End as well as to those of the West End of London. His early loan collections of books were accorded a hearty reception and ultimately sentiment was aroused that led to the establishment of the Whitechapel Library. Works of art, until then unknown in the East End, were borrowed from West End galleries for display in the impoverished neighborhood of Toynbee Hall. The development of this interest created a demand that was ultimately met by the establishment of the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Movements were set afoot to introduce the teaching of art into the schools.

Classes, clubs, and discussion groups were started. Music and various kinds of handicrafts were introduced. Art in all of its forms was stressed.

This early concern to promote cultural activity has persisted in the settlements. Most of them are still very active in stimulating interest in the graphic and plastic arts, in music, in literature, in dramatics, in the dance, and, in fact, in all forms of artistic expression. These efforts have, in many instances, produced gratifying results. Many of those whose artistic interests were originally discovered and developed by the settlements have later achieved outstanding success as professional artists. More important, however, than the achievements of individuals are the results in terms of continuing community provisions. Since the founding of the first settlements in the 1880's, some of the major inequalities in cultural opportunities have been very sharply reduced. Both in England and in this country a universal system of compulsory free public education now exists, and, in addition, the means of obtaining specialized education and higher education have been greatly liberalized and expanded. Although the settlements are by no means exclusively responsible for these developments, their influence in promoting them has been considerable, particularly in helping to create the demand for the service. The programs of the public schools have also been greatly enriched by the introduction of art, music, and the various crafts. Tax-supported libraries, often with branches in all parts of the community, have been built up. The movement to obtain these and similar cultural services received consistent stimulation from the settlements.

Social ideals are often approximated rather than completely realized. Cultural democracy, like political democracy, has not been completely attained. Some of the settlements, in appraising the accomplishments of recent decades, have come to believe that the contributions of political democracy and of cultural democracy, important as they have been, are not enough. Many of the old inequalities remain, some of them perhaps in less marked degree than formerly, but others in substantially their original measure. Hence new efforts must be made and new goals envisaged. The view has gained currency in some quarters that the next move must be toward the attainment of economic democracy. Among those holding this view are some of the leaders in the social settlements. As a result, efforts have been made in some settlements to develop and promote programs of workers' education. This may be done by creating a special department to develop the new program. More often, experimentation is carried on through the forums so long sponsored by settlements. In some places these forums appear to be devoting increased attention to prob-

lems of labor economics. The discussion programs of settlement clubs and the dramatic and artistic activities likewise may emphasize current economic problems. Although there is no basis for believing that this objective will become dominant in settlement programs throughout the country, it is clear that some interesting experiments in the promotion of economic democracy seem likely to be tried.

The modern settlement, like most social agencies, usually has a governing board. In a majority of cases the members of the board do not reside in the district served by the settlement.<sup>7</sup> The activities of the settlement are usually carried on by three groups: the employed staff, the residents, and the neighbors. Originally, the settlement was regarded primarily as a dwelling-house which was located in an underprivileged neighborhood in order to facilitate contacts between the residents of the house and those who lived in the neighborhood. The residents were usually individuals who had enjoyed the benefits of a good education. Often they were persons with special talents. They hoped that by living close to those who had enjoyed very few advantages they might be able to share with these neighbors some of the privileges which they themselves had enjoyed. They wanted to establish contacts and friendships in an easy informal way. In short, they wanted to be neighbors. In addition, some, at least, hoped to learn a great deal about the problems of blighted areas and of the people who lived in them. They believed this knowledge might be useful, not only in advising and helping the people in the neighborhood, but also in interpreting social needs to the wider and more prosperous areas outside the slums. The settlement would thus be a sounding board by means of which destructive conditions would be exposed and reforms would be advanced.

The residents still play a prominent role in settlement programs. Most of them are employed full time throughout the day in districts outside the neighborhood. They live in the settlement and give volunteer service in the evening or on week ends. Some serve as leaders of clubs. Others teach classes in art or in music. Since many settlements are in areas inhabited mainly by foreign-born persons, some residents usually wish to teach classes in English and in citizenship. The objective is for each resident to contribute to the program along the lines of his special interests or special talents. The employed staff, in addition to planning and directing the program, carries on many of the activities for which the services of residents are not available.

The neighbors usually play a prominent part in the settlement pro-

<sup>7</sup> For an interesting statement on this question see Robert A. Woods, *The Neighborhood in Nation Building* (1923), pp. 68-69.

gram. Through their clubs they often suggest activities. They also cooperate with the staff and with the residents in promoting improvements in the neighborhood. At entertainments they usually provide most of the musical and dramatic talent. Some of them may assume responsibility for specific activities, such as the teaching of an art class or supervision of a boys' club. In so far as possible, most settlements encourage the neighbors to share with the staff and the residents in the actual day-to-day work of the organization.

The experience gained in living in blighted areas has led some of the settlements to institute special services for the benefit of the neighborhood. Kindergartens were established, for example, because very young children who habitually played in the streets needed a refuge in which their energies could be constructively directed. Day nurseries were organized because working mothers had no suitable place to leave their children while they were at work in the factory or the shop. Summer camps were established because slum children, like other children, needed the experience of group life in a vacation environment. Gymnasiums were built to provide an outlet for the energies of older children and adolescents. Some settlements employed case workers to assist neighborhood families in working out their problems. Group work methods also gained favor, and specialists in group work were added to the employed staff. Thus the settlement, which had started with a philosophy and a method rather than with a program, gradually acquired a program. Many of the elements of this program are found in other agencies, such as the public schools, the playgrounds, and the public community centers. Hence at present the program of the settlement is unique only in so far as it provides a natural basis for contacts with a neighborhood in which the staff and the residents aspire to provide leadership in the stimulating of community organization activities.

The settlements epitomize in tangible form the persistent and recurring belief that friendly personal contacts are of basic importance and that the neighborhood is therefore the most promising area in which to institute community organization activities. Without doubt an intimate knowledge of any slum neighborhood acquaints its possessor with most of the pressing social problems of the day. But it is one thing to study a problem and quite another to mobilize support for a plan to solve it. Granting that the neighborhood may offer an excellent opportunity to identify and study social needs, it does not necessarily follow that the neighborhood provides an equally effective channel for organizing and promoting a social program or a social reform.

The experiences of some of the settlements have thrown interesting light on this question. The discovery of oppressive working conditions imposed upon women and girls led the residents of one settlement outside the neighborhood and even outside the city to seek relief from the state legislature. In the 1930's the settlements, through their national federation, collected data relative to unemployment and its effects in working-class neighborhoods. These useful studies were widely drawn upon in legislative hearings where the settlements were very active in advocating measures to reduce the hazards and hardships of unemployment. What they had learned in the neighborhood had led them to the halls of Congress to seek a solution at the national level. Thus, from the standpoint of community organization, the neighborhood approach, which the work of the settlements illustrates, has both strengths and limitations. Undoubtedly, the neighborhood provides a promising basis for the study of social needs. With respect to problems strictly limited to the neighborhood, it is also the logical unit in which to organize corrective efforts. Many of the major problems in the neighborhood, however, cannot be effectively attacked by isolated neighborhood groups; they require promotional activity and concerted pressure throughout some larger unit which alone has power to effect the needed improvements.

The settlements have recognized the limitations of the neighborhood approach and have attempted to supplement it in various ways. Many of the settlements are active in the local council of social agencies. This affiliation affords an opportunity for them to pool their information and to correlate their efforts with those of other local agencies. In addition, in the large cities, local federations of settlements have been organized. These federations, which usually include most of the settlements in the city, are potentially of considerable importance. Obviously, conclusions that rest on a narrow base of evidence are subject to challenge. Through the local federation, it may be possible to obtain comparable data from a number of neighborhoods and thus strengthen the documentary material needed for effective promotional activity. Likewise, if the member-settlements in the federation agree upon the need for certain developments, they may be able to organize support simultaneously in various sections of the city. Thus the settlements have created channels to facilitate united effort among their local neighborhoods.

The settlements have also sought to broaden their approach through organization of a national federation. In 1940 the number of member-settlements in the national federation was 155.<sup>8</sup> The national federation is

<sup>8</sup> Lillie M. Peck, "Settlements," *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, p. 503.

concerned with problems of training and personnel, with standards of work, and with joint action. One of its first activities, following its organization in 1911, was to work for the establishment of the United States Children's Bureau. In ensuing years it has directed numerous studies based on the assembling of data from many of its member-agencies in blighted areas throughout the country. These studies have related to such problems as unemployment, minimum wages, housing conditions, medical care, etc. Efforts have also been made, as in the case of the unemployment studies, to follow through with an active promotional campaign. In short, the national federation has provided a means of supplementing the neighborhood approach with the broader attack which many social problems require.

In community organization, major efforts may be directed either toward the natural leaders of the community, on the one hand, or toward the rank-and-file, on the other. As a rule, in large population units, such as cities, the tendency is to attempt to stimulate participation on the part of those who are in positions of leadership. In smaller areas, such as neighborhoods, it is easier to reach down to the rank-and-file. Perhaps the chief importance of the settlement or of any other neighborhood agency is its capacity to help uninfluential masses of people to understand their needs and their rights. Persons in positions of leadership are of great importance in promoting constructive developments, but they usually act with increased assurance if they are aware of interest and support among the rank-and-file. The neighborhood agency, in helping to create this demand for improved conditions, performs an unspectacular but basic function in community organization.

#### OTHER AGENCIES

In some communities important work in planning and co-ordinating welfare programs is accomplished by specialized groups that operate in the same functional field. Vocational counseling, for example, is a highly experimental kind of activity. Sometimes several agencies in the community are interested in this field and attempt to develop it in conjunction with another program, such as recreation, family welfare, or medical social service. In addition, there may be one or more agencies which devote their full effort to the field of vocational guidance. In such communities a demand may arise for some kind of machinery to correlate the activities of these various groups. The solution may be worked out by organizing a committee representing the interested agencies, or the council of social agencies may create a subcouncil on vocational guidance, or, by common



consent, one agency may be asked to assume special responsibility for co-ordinating existing services and stimulating joint planning. Developments of this type occur in various fields, such as mental hygiene, social hygiene, tuberculosis, etc. The end-result may be an effective program of community organization within a specific field of interest.

Local units of professional social work organizations likewise direct their attention in many instances to community organization. Among these are local chapters of the American Association of Social Workers, the American Association of Medical Social Workers, and the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers. The work of the local organization of medical social workers in New York City, for example, first revealed the extent and character of the needs of men who were rejected by the Selective Service System because of physical or mental disabilities.<sup>9</sup> In this particular instance the results accomplished not only were influential locally but also drew attention to the problem in many other sections of the country.

In recent years there has been a remarkable growth of voluntary insurance plans to finance hospital care. The hospitals soon found that this development was creating new problems for them. As a result, hospital councils have been organized in some communities. Originally created in some communities for the purpose of effecting a joint approach to the insurance organizations, these councils have quickly expanded their activities to include joint planning with respect to many other common concerns. In one city, for example, the hospital council has attacked the complex question of devising comparable cost-accounting systems for hospitals. This is obviously a problem that must be worked out before any genuinely satisfactory method can be devised for reimbursing private hospitals for services rendered to persons entitled to care under public or private insurance systems or under any public assistance program. Thus the problem is an obstacle that retards the community organization process; for it stands in the way of a pooling of resources by various health agencies to achieve more nearly adequate coverage of the needs of the sick. The member-agencies of the health councils feel a common need to find a way to surmount this obstacle. Though self-interest is an element that animates their joint activity, many of the hospitals also realize that the council is probably the only group that can work out an answer and that the community has a right to expect them to provide one. The specialized nature of their experience places a similar responsibility upon them to

<sup>9</sup> See Theodate Soule and Sadie Shapiro, "Medical Social Service for Rejectees," *The Family*, XXIII, No. 5 (July, 1942), 163-73.

seek the solution of many other problems relating to community care for the sick.

These hospital councils may or may not be affiliated with the council of social agencies and its subcouncil on health. If they do not belong to the central council of social agencies, a new problem immediately arises, of course, as to how the planning and co-ordinating activities of the two organizations may, in turn, be cleared or co-ordinated with one another.

Following the outbreak of World War II, local councils of defense became very active in most communities. In many places they worked out detailed plans to meet a variety of needs which might possibly arise because of the war. In some cities, for example, detailed arrangements were perfected to handle the casualties resulting from possible air raids. These plans included the designating and equipping of first-aid stations and evacuation hospitals, the enrolling of motor transport, the enlistment of reserve personnel, etc. In fact, planning has perhaps never been carried out in greater detail than in many of the defense councils. Nor have plans ever previously related to an equally broad range of human needs. The many kinds of crises resulting from enemy action or sabotage were listed, and arrangements were effected to deal with each of them. But planning was not limited to these spectacular kinds of situations. The care of children of working mothers, programs to prevent the rise of juvenile delinquency, recreation for in-migrant war workers—these and scores of similar problems received careful consideration by many of the defense councils. From 1941 to 1943 the defense councils were in many communities the outstandingly active planning and co-ordinating groups. A marked decline in their activity was noted in 1943. Doubtless, some will continue to function in the postwar years. But in many communities there is already a conspicuous trend toward reverting to the permanent agencies for purposes of postwar planning. At present it seems clear that most of the defense councils will not long survive the termination of hostilities.

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DOCUMENT 14-A  
EXCERPTS FROM TOYNBEE HALL—GENERAL  
INFORMATION, 1899<sup>10</sup>

Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel was founded in 1884. It is intended for the residence of men who have gone up to London after completing their university career and who wish to live in an industrial district.

There are many who feel keenly the difference between their own lot and that of the majority of their fellow-countrymen and who would be sorry to go through life without some definite and effective attempt to share what they have received and to "make some of their friends among the poor." Some can do this in the course of their own professional work and, where it should always begin, around their own homes. Others, when they enter upon London life in lodgings, find their intentions hard to realize and often let them drift until they are given up altogether. It is otherwise in a university settlement. There, work of the most various kinds is already going on; the advice and sympathy of those who are meeting the same difficulties are always at hand; the working classes and the poor are the neighbors.

The majority of the residents at Toynbee Hall are engaged in professional duties of their own and take classes, visit clubs, etc., in their evenings or other spare time. A few of the residents are able to give their whole time. A large number of helpers from all parts of London, including many former residents, work in connection with the Hall, and *regular* assistance from those who cannot live there is heartily welcomed.

There is accommodation for twenty residents. There are at present (January, 1899) fifteen fully elected residents,<sup>11</sup> besides others living and working in the House. Two or three rooms are reserved for visitors when possible.

The cost of living at the Hall ranges from £1 5s. to £2 5s. per week.

DUTIES UNDERTAKEN BY RESIDENTS AND ASSOCIATES

Care is taken to strengthen existing institutions, of which there are many in East London, rather than to start new ones; to supply them with workers rather than to supplant or compete with them.

<sup>10</sup> Pp. 4-13.

<sup>11</sup> I.e., those who have been registered as such by the council, on the joint recommendation of the warden and residents, after three months' stay in the House.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Many of the residents are "managers" of board and voluntary schools. These schools affect nearly the whole population of the East End at a critical age and cannot shift their responsibilities, even in the most difficult cases, onto any other agency. The "managers," a kind of "governing body," help to put life and spirit into the school routine, and mediate between each school and the London School Board. They offer sympathy and friendship to the hard-worked teachers, they assist the formation of athletic clubs, they take parties of children on Saturdays to the country or to the sights of London, they see that ailing and needy children get a country holiday, and their influence with the boys reaches beyond the school-day and the school.

## PUPIL-TEACHERS

Toynbee Hall is the center of an association for encouraging athletic and debating societies among the London pupil-teachers (boys of fourteen to nineteen, training for masterships).

## CHILDREN'S COUNTRY HOLIDAYS

A piece of work which reaches the homes of the poorest, and in which temporary visitors during the earlier part of the long vacation might give useful help, is the "Children's Country Holidays." Over 31,000 London children were sent to the country for at least a fortnight last year through this agency, which is largely assisted by residents of Toynbee Hall and the other settlements.

## CHILDREN'S DINNERS

During the winter, children from neighboring schools are entertained as guests at the midday meal.

## CLUBS

Four clubs formed of "Old Boys" from East End schools are managed by residents or associates. The clubs meet for classes or recreation three or four times a week; in the spring and summer, outings of three or four days, in camp or on the move, are planned and conducted.

The Lolesworth Club, for working men and women, is close to the Hall, and residents serve on the committee.

Other men's and boys' clubs are visited by residents and associates. With more help from Oxford and Cambridge much more might be done.

## CADET CORPS

A cadet company was started by residents and associates, in 1885, with eight or ten recruits; it now numbers about 200 lads of fifteen to nineteen

(including the sections connected with Oxford House and the Haileybury Mission), and forms part of the Cadet Battalion of the Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment, formerly the Second Foot), consisting of about seven hundred members, with company quarters in various districts of London.

#### SANITARY AID AND C.O.S.

Residents and associates serve on the local sanitary aid committees, which deal with cases of overcrowding and neglect in some of the most wretched streets of London; and on the Charity Organization committees, which, when no existing agencies are available, give relief and help of the most varied kinds, while trying to strengthen, not weaken, character and the capacity for self-help.

#### JEWISH POOR

One of the residents, himself a Jew, has long visited among the poorest of the Jewish families, chiefly of foreign extraction, who form a large part of the Whitechapel population.

A committee of ladies, meeting in Toynbee Hall, works among the poorest and most miserable, in ways which are beyond the reach of most residents in a men's settlement and has assisted, within the last year, over ninety women and girls from the Whitechapel Workhouse and Infirmary.

#### EDUCATION

The educational work consists of (a) university extension lectures at Toynbee Hall, Limehouse, and Poplar; (b) numerous smaller classes and lectures of a less advanced kind; (c) clubs and societies (Shakespeare, Antiquarian, Natural History, Toynbee Travellers', Sketching, etc.), including associations of present and past students, intended to promote among them the kind of social intercourse which forms so large a part of the charm of school and college life.

This work, though it extends to about one thousand students and occupies a large place in reports and in the notice of visitors to the Hall, does not absorb so much of the time or care of the actual residents as is sometimes supposed. Toynbee Hall has given it a home and center and has, to a great extent, supplied the initial impetus which has enabled it to go on of itself. Many of the teachers are supplied, and the necessary superintendence given, by the London University Extension Society (which gave lectures in Whitechapel before Toynbee Hall was built) and by a large committee, on which six of the residents have a place.

Much of the educational work here described does not touch directly the "working classes," but a class rather better off, whose intellectual

needs are in some ways as great and the provision for them ("secondary education") not yet so well organized. There can be no doubt that the future of London and the welding of its citizens into one will be greatly influenced for good by the growth of real knowledge and of liberal education among this class and by the friendships formed in the common pursuit of it.

But, in the words of a report just issued, "the old work keeps around us old friends, the new work is attracting new ones; and these latter belong, in increasing number, to the artisan and labouring classes."

This new work includes (a) ambulance classes (Toynbee and the Isle of Dogs); (b) a nursing guild; (c) some lectures on elementary and practical points of English law; (d) afternoon classes at Toynbee Hall in dress-making, bookkeeping, etc., conducted by ladies, for girls who have left the elementary schools in the neighborhood. Special mention should be made (e) of the evening classes (Toynbee and the Isle of Dogs, the latter under the London School Board) for men who have missed or forgotten their schooling, or who wish for instruction in subjects not taught in elementary schools; these are mostly attended by artisans.

#### STUDENTS' RESIDENCES

"Wadham House" and "Balliol House," close to Toynbee Hall, give to men engaged during the day in business, but wishing to avail themselves of the educational opportunities offered by the Hall, some of the advantages of college life. The rent of a room (including the use of a "common room") is 7s. to 7/6 a week, and the total weekly cost is 15s. to £1 per week. There are about fifty students now in residence.

#### POPULAR LECTURES

Popular lectures are given on Saturdays and Sundays. Among the lecturers within the last two years have been: Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir Francis Grenfell, Augustine Birrell, Frederic Harrison, Canon Scott Holland, Miss Mary Kingsley, A. Sidgwick, Dr. Tylor, and others.

#### THE LIBRARY

The Students' Free Library numbers over 7,000 volumes, and is especially strong in works on political economy and political science. The average number of readers per day is about 25; during the first half of 1898 over 2,700 books were read in the library, and over 1,400 taken out.

#### WORKING-CLASS SOCIETIES

Many educated persons, even those who are eager for the "elevation of the working classes," are ignorant of the motives and tendencies, per-

haps of the very existence, of the great societies by which the working classes are elevating themselves—Friendly Societies, Co-operative Societies (productive and distributive) and Trade Unions. The friendly relations existing between the warden and residents and many of the leaders of these bodies in East London (partly formed at the time of the Dockers' Strike) offer opportunities of gaining knowledge of such societies at first hand, and not merely through books, to those who wish to do so. Delegate and court meetings of two of the great friendly societies are held regularly in Toynbee Hall. A small co-operative society, in a poorly paid productive industry (the bass dressers), has been formed and carried on successfully for some years, largely owing to the encouragement of residents.

#### CONFERENCES

Conferences have been held within the last two or three years on practical questions of temperance, education, trade-unionism, co-operation, the Poor Law, labor farms, the housing of the poor, the East London water supply, at which working-class leaders have met and exchanged ideas with such men as the Bishop of London, Viscount Peel, Lord Herschell, Mr. Leonard Courtney, etc.

#### DEBATES

A somewhat different section of working-class thought and feeling is represented by the Thursday evening "smoking debates." Addresses are given by speakers of very various opinions on "burning questions of the day"; and in the debates which follow, opinions are expressed, often founded on personal experiences—also varying, but with a decided tendency to socialism and extreme radicalism—by speakers from among a thoroughly working-class audience.

#### SERVICE ON PUBLIC BODIES

Many residents and associates have been elected to various public bodies. Toynbee Hall is represented at present on the Whitechapel Board of Guardians (by the warden), Board of Works, the Vestry, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, the School Board for London, and the County Council.

#### SOCIAL STUDY AND INQUIRY

A late resident has assisted Mr. Charles Booth in his well-known work on the *Life and Labour of the People*. Special inquiries have been undertaken at different times into the question of the unemployed, the inmates of casual wards, the feeding of school children, the employment of school children out of school-hours, etc.



Several American and French visitors interested in settlement work have stayed for long periods at Toynbee Hall; and these visits have left pleasant recollections on both sides.

#### ATHLETICS

There is a Toynbee football club, open to members of Wadham and Balliol houses and registered students, which has arranged matches with several colleges at Oxford and Cambridge; a swimming club, with practical instruction in lifesaving; a tennis court (at the back of Toynbee Hall); gymnastics at the Lolesworth Club; and boxing at the Sydney Old Boys' Club.

#### ENTERTAINMENTS

The various clubs and societies mentioned in this account, and many others, constantly meet in the public dining-room and drawing-room at the Hall; and parties and concerts are given in Toynbee Hall, Wadham House, and Balliol House to the neighbors, including aged poor from the workhouse, children from the schools and their parents, the frequenters of the Thursday evening debates, and many others.

#### PICTURES

A total of 51,450 persons visited the Whitechapel picture exhibition last spring. Members of the university who are in town during the Easter vacation are invited to serve as "watchers" in the rooms or explain the pictures to the visitors.

#### MUSIC

The Toynbee Orchestral Society, recently formed, has given concerts in different parts of the East End.

Assistance from college musical societies at concerts or musical parties, given in or near Toynbee Hall, is always welcome.

#### RELATIONS OF TOYNBEE HALL TO RELIGION AND POLITICS

Toynbee Hall, in its corporate capacity, is nonpolitical and undenominational. No one by living there or by helping it commits himself to any particular set of opinions. But individual residents can and do take their own line, both in thought and in work.

There are questions of a political character on which opinions differ widely—about trade-unionism and labor, local government, public health, and the care of the poor—which are closely bound up with the welfare of the East End; and to hold aloof from such questions would be to throw

away some of the best opportunities for bringing about a better state of things and for co-operating on an equal footing with those who are trying to do so. Differences of opinion exist among the residents as elsewhere; and they have often taken different sides in parliamentary, school-board, and county-council elections. But the public rooms of the Hall are not used for distinctly party purposes; and the object of the Hall as a whole is not to make converts to conservatism, radicalism, or socialism, but, taking men as they are, to induce them to examine their own principles and so to make them, in no party sense, *better* conservatives, radicals, or socialists.

## DOCUMENT 14-B

### EXCERPTS FROM THE *Annual Report for 1931* UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO SETTLEMENT<sup>12</sup>

#### THE FIRST THIRTY-SIX YEARS

*Founding.*—The University of Chicago Settlement was founded in 1894 by President William Rainey Harper and the Christian Union of the University, after they had made a survey of the city to determine a location needing the services of faculty and students desirous of carrying out the principles and theories of the social sciences. The aims and purpose of the Settlement were set forth in the second *University Register* for July, 1893—July, 1894, in the following statement:

#### THE UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT

A settlement is a body of educated people living in a neighborhood for the purpose of co-operation in social work and for learning the concrete facts of life at first hand. There are vast accumulations of knowledge lying dead because they are not communicated. The world of culture is closed to hundreds of thousands from want of mediators. The existence of multitudes of honest people is intellectually and aesthetically barren because they are cut off from the fountains of intelligence. On the other hand, the lives of cultivated people are frequently narrow, undignified, useless, and false from exclusiveness. Great poets, novelists, statesmen, preachers, have always known mankind in many aspects. The student of politics, economics, and social philosophy can avoid provincial, individualistic, and class prejudices only by mingling with people of varied experience. Our political life is on the basis of equality. Our economic, intellectual, and spiritual life is not democratic. The whole organic activity must be pervaded by one spirit or our civilization is in constant peril. If ignorance and rudeness control the ballot, culture is insecure. In all communities there are some aspiring souls. The settlement aims to discover these and help them in moral leadership. The residents aim to promote every effort at local amelioration—economic, domestic, educational, social, moral, political, and religious. They do not introduce a foreign institution but fertilize and cultivate the springing elements of good already found in the neighborhood. As the means of the students who give their services are limited, the provision for expenses needs to be supplied from other sources, and philanthropy can find no wiser channel of beneficence.

. . . . .

*Neighborliness.*—The purpose of the Settlement, according to President Harper and Miss McDowell, was not charity but neighborliness. To the people back of the Yards it was to mean the services of a great University, and to the University constant contact with reality through neighborli-

<sup>12</sup> Pp. 2-4.

ness. The Settlement, when Miss McDowell undertook to create it, was bounded on the east by a great pioneer industry faced with problems of production and, like all industry at that time, individualistic and but slightly conscious of the human factors involved in production. On the west were the "dumps," great open pits where the city threw the garbage collected by horse-drawn vehicles. On the north was foul-smelling Bubbly Creek, into which was thrown the refuse from the Yards. All about were unpaved streets, sidewalks (where there were any at all) made of boards with planks frequently missing, no libraries, baths, or adequate schooling facilities, but many thriving saloons. One street was known as Whiskey Row because every house on the block contained a saloon.

The population of the neighborhood was largely immigrant. Wave upon wave of new immigrants came, forcing their predecessors out and up. As each group became financially established, it moved away from the neighborhood, leaving room for the newcomer. Since, as Miss McDowell wrote in 1913, "the ward doubles its population in a decade and changes its nationality every fifteen years," the work of the Settlement was constantly with the newcomer and the child. The Settlement, the ward politician, and the industry were the permanent factors.

## DOCUMENT 14-C

### DECENTRALIZING THE SOCIAL SERVICES<sup>13</sup>

Although I would greatly enjoy devoting the twenty minutes allotted to me to an airing of my views about community leadership and about community needs and how they are established, I have concluded that this time will be more effectively employed if I tell you about what I conceive to be the indispensable next step, both in making better use of the resources for social welfare that we now have, and in developing new ones. Put bluntly, I do not see how we are going to make as substantial progress as we should until we have worked out and put into practice a more *systematically co-ordinated geographical decentralization* of our public and our voluntary social services. This string of abstract words is forbidding and will never serve as a battle slogan for social advance, but the idea that it is intended to convey is essentially simple. When explained, it will, I think, have special appeal to the imaginations of settlement people. I hope that it will commend itself as a basic element of scientific municipal administration and of social planning in a community of the magnitude and complexity of New York City.

Your program asks: "How can agencies work together more effectively and how can we fill the gaps in community organization?" Obviously the answers to these are, first, to find the gaps and then to attract community leadership, wherever and however emerging, to apply its energies in an orderly but relentless—perhaps "unremitting" would be a better word—campaign to bridge them. It is as a means to that end that I am putting this idea before you.

To introduce you properly to this idea I need a map of New York City that shows how the administrations of the several social services, public and voluntary, are now decentralized, a map that superimposes on the outline of the five boroughs indications of the sizes and shapes of the pieces into which the Greater City has been cut up for the purposes of managing, directing, and supervising the work of the health department, the welfare department, the public schools, the police department, the fire department, and the other public services, as well as the districting systems of the voluntary agencies. This map would, of course, relate only to the

<sup>13</sup> This paper was presented October 23, 1943, before a meeting of the United Neighborhood Houses of New York City by Dr. Neva Deardorff, assistant executive director of the Welfare Council of New York City.

decentralization of the services of agencies whose programs touch the lives of persons and families in a direct and fairly intimate fashion. If I had such a map here, you would see at once that a crazy quilt would, by comparison, appear to be a beautiful and orderly design. Each of the public departments and each of the voluntary agencies has carved out pieces of the land and of the population of New York City in such way as to make mincemeat of any plan of decentralization of the other departments. The boundaries of the districts are so consistently divergent that one wonders whether there is something inherently repugnant in the idea of having any common boundaries for any two services of any sort, however closely related they may be or ought to be in actual administration. Sometimes two systems, consisting of approximately equal numbers of districts that could easily have coinciding lines, are shifted a few blocks, sometimes only one block, apart. As you can readily see, this is sufficient to scramble up the picture and make it impossible for any two administrators to have a common area of responsibility.

To get down to cases, some months ago we prepared a couple of small maps in our office that displayed the present decentralization schemes of five municipal departments in two sections of the city, East Harlem and the Bedford district in Brooklyn. The health center district lines were chosen as the master-outline, and the district lines of the other four departments were overlaid upon them. The conditions in these two parts of the city are in no way peculiar. Moreover, we hasten to add that we do not regard the health center district boundaries as ideal. We used them merely as a starting-point.

From this simple process the fact emerges that the East Harlem Health Center District, which in 1940 had a population of 208,028 persons, overlaps

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2 police precincts, both partially | 3 welfare districts, 1 completely,                     |
| 3 school districts, all partially  | 2 partially  |
|                                    | 9 fire department districts, 3 completely, 6 partially |

The Bedford Health Center District, with a population of 257,810, overlaps

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 7 police precincts, 1 completely, | 4 welfare districts, all partially                       |
| 6 partially                       | 14 fire department districts, 4 completely, 10 partially |
| 4 school districts, all partially |  |

Moreover, no two of these other departments have coinciding districts in either of these two sections of the city, though it must be clear that, with the exception of the Fire Department, the populations within their several districts cannot be very different in size.

The boundaries of the school districts, welfare districts, police precincts, and fire department districts, all violate census-tract boundaries. Thus these departments deprive themselves of a substantial fund of readily available basic population data collected and tabulated at great expense by the U.S. Census Bureau and of the vital statistics compiled annually on a census-tract and health-area basis by the Health Department.

While the exigencies of administration obviously, among the several departments, require flexibility in the *size* of administrative districts, both in area and in volume of population, these exigencies do not require such chaotic and needlessly awkward arrangements as now exist. Two rules of good practice could easily be observed: (1) census-tract boundary lines could be followed and (2) districts could be arranged in clusters with common outer boundaries. It should be possible to assign to a given population group of 200,000-300,000 persons—a large city in itself—one or more district offices for each of the departments whose work bears a direct relation to the size and characteristics of the population served. If only a modest amount of order were introduced into this situation, each such population group could have a set of officials with common territorial interests and a set of indexes of health and well-being related to its economic and housing conditions and to its social services that could be easily watched from year to year.

Eventually, each of these large districts would need a well-located civic center, composed of a group of general municipal office buildings in which space could be assigned to the several departments as their changing needs would dictate. This center would be the headquarters of the local forces attempting to cope with the bad conditions revealed by the population, housing, health, police, and other data routinely brought to light. Around these civic centers the interest of voluntary social agencies that serve persons and families in their own homes could take form. Almost no voluntary agency can now minister to a population of the size of that of New York City. Most of them would do well to relate themselves to smaller population groups rather than to appear to cover the city or a borough and then to apply limiting "intake" policies that are difficult to administer and troublesome for other agencies.

But the most important gain to be made by such an integration of the municipal services is that for the great mass of citizens these local centers

would symbolize their government in some of its most helpful phases and would afford them an avenue to better understanding of its services and the relationship of these services to the general welfare of their part of this city. It must be obvious that, had we enjoyed such a system of decentralization when we were confronted with the need of organizing for civilian defense, the task would have been immeasurably easier.

G. D. H. Cole recently remarked in a penetrating article on "Democracy Face to Face with Hugeness" that "our problem . . . is to find democratic ways of living for little men in big societies. . . . Democracy can work in a great State (and a fortiori between great States or over Europe or the world) only if each State is made up of a host of little democracies, and rests finally, not on isolated individuals, but on groups small enough to express the spirit of neighborhood and personal acquaintance."

Rearranging district boundaries always means taking a fairly stiff dose of administrative inconvenience during the period of readjustment, but that, too, could be mitigated with some carefully devised plans to do the job bit by bit but with relentless persistence after it is begun.

Once in effect, this type of governmental structure—a structure that could be achieved largely through administrative action—would probably last a long time because it would hold itself together by sheer utility and fitness to the needs of so gigantic a population. Closer integration of the city's administrative forces in the social services at a level below the mayor's cabinet and for population groups of relatively equal size, but smaller than the boroughs, seems a fundamental in this city.


Nobody can work in the field of community organization in New York City without becoming deeply impressed with the fact that organizational arrangements and meeting places are needed which will facilitate acquaintance between local municipal authorities and the leaders of the voluntary agencies. That is the only way that they can come to learn accurately about each other's work and can plan together for the solution of problems that defy solution through separate and isolated attacks. Listening posts are needed to receive the comments and suggestions of the people in whose behalf all of this is undertaken. Finally, we need cohesion of forces in order to get things done in a given neighborhood or section of the city.

The postwar period and, in some ways, even the war period itself provide excellent opportunities for taking several forward steps in this direction. When the war is over, new buildings will unquestionably be provided for many of the municipal services. If unemployment threatens, we shall probably be wanting to stimulate the construction industry. In so far as postwar plans are now in course of preparation, decisions are now being




made as to the future plan of the city's district buildings. Now is the time to apply all our ingenuity in planning the grouping of these district buildings in such way that by their very location, the municipal departments and the voluntary organizations are encouraged, if not forced, to operate from common centers and to direct their combined attention to coinciding areas. Once we have done that, we have set the stage for responsible groups to see their job whole and in that way to discover the gaps in the present array of services and to apply their combined intelligence and resources to the task of closing them.

Busy and well organized as are the bees, they need frames within which to construct honeycombs and a system of hexagonal compartments into which to store the honey. Likewise, we need a better framework and a more systematic plan of compartments into which to store the honey of community knowledge, interest, and leadership throughout the neighborhoods of this huge city.



## CHAPTER XV

### STATE-WIDE PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATING AGENCIES



#### THE STATE-WIDE PRIVATE AGENCY

SOCIAL needs normally manifest themselves in local communities. Perhaps there is no money for relief of destitution, or housing is bad, or people find themselves unable to obtain medical care. Such situations come to the attention of social agencies and of socially conscious individuals in the community, and an effort may thereupon be made to remedy the situation. But very soon it becomes apparent that some of these problems cannot be solved by exerting pressure upon local authorities; for local governments are not sovereign bodies. In this country, with respect to the social services, sovereignty resides in the states.<sup>1</sup> Hence the local governments possess only such powers as the sovereign state may see fit to delegate to them. With the best will in the world they may for that reason find themselves without the powers needed to correct a destructive or ill-financed program or to institute new services for which an urgent need exists. The needed improvements must therefore be sought at a higher level. The state, as the sovereign body, must be persuaded either to inaugurate the desired programs itself or to delegate to the local governments the power to do so.

Moreover, certain individuals in the community stand in need of services which are provided, not by local authorities, but by the state. In most communities, for example, there is no provision for the education of blind children. If these children are to receive a fair opportunity, they must be given the benefit of a very specialized type of educational program that is ordinarily provided only in an institution operated by the state government. In fact, with respect to some types of handicaps and disabilities, the

<sup>1</sup> Although the federal unemployment relief acts of the 1930's and the Social Security Act of 1935 were moves in the direction of federal responsibility, most of the basic social services continue to derive their sanctions from the individual states.

number of cases in any one community (other than large cities) is so small that it would be impossible to provide on a local basis the quality of treatment needed. The history of the care of the mentally ill affords a conspicuous proof that in such instances the state must provide the service. Originally a local responsibility, the insane were, under local authorities, subjected to cruelties and hardships that practically guaranteed progressive deterioration of their powers. Dorothea Dix, in her investigations in the nineteenth century, found them chained in the basements of jails and bedded on piles of straw. The evidence she collected throughout the country proved beyond doubt that local governments, usually with only a few mental cases on their hands, would never be able to provide the equipment and personnel needed to undertake a genuinely remedial program. This could be done only by a larger unit, such as the state;<sup>2</sup> for the state, with large numbers of patients scattered throughout its territory and with greater resources to draw upon, could make available both the equipment and the staff to undertake scientific, restorative treatment.

Thus gradually a number of services have grown up that are operated directly by the state, sometimes with and sometimes without financial participation on the part of the local governments. Many of these services are for the benefit of clients who are peculiarly helpless, such as the mentally ill, the blind, and the deaf. Reluctance on the part of relatives to send these clients to institutions in remote parts of the state creates a need to convey assurance that a humane and enlightened program of care is provided. There is need also for a channel through which the state welfare services may be impartially appraised. An intimate knowledge of these services and an enlightened understanding of them on the part of citizen groups is a safeguard against periodic regressions in standards. It is a basic problem, both in public welfare administration and in community organization, to see that such a safeguard exists.

Recognition of this need has led, in some states, to the organization of state-wide voluntary agencies that are concerned to safeguard and to improve the social services of the state and, in some instances, of the local political subdivisions as well. In 1941, agencies of this type were operating in eight states.<sup>3</sup> These agencies vary widely in age, in program, and in influence. The two that seem to be most widely known throughout the country are the State Charities Aid Association of New York and the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania. The oldest organization in the

<sup>2</sup> Actually, Miss Dix also advocated federal action in behalf of the insane, but her efforts in this direction were defeated.

<sup>3</sup> *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, pp. 758-60.

group is the State Charities Aid Association of New York, which was founded in 1872. Although it performs certain functional services in the field of child welfare, the State Charities Aid Association is of interest to students of community organization primarily because of its long record of effective promotional activity.<sup>4</sup> Throughout its long history this organization has emphasized fact-finding as a basis for social planning. With approximately ten thousand members and 107 local committees scattered throughout the state (in 1941), it is in a position to publicize its findings and to stimulate action in behalf of improved programs. The record clearly indicates that its efforts in behalf of adequate provisions and high standards in the fields of public health, mental hygiene, and public welfare have borne fruit. The record also suggests that there has been a progressive evolution both in objectives and in methods. In the early years considerable attention was devoted to the visitation of institutions, such as local almshouses and state hospitals, in the hope that the information thus gained might be used to promote improved standards of physical care and treatment. In recent years a department of community organization has been established, and skilled workers have been assigned to local county committees to help them in acquiring a thorough understanding of all local needs and services, both institutional and noninstitutional. A major strength of this movement has been its steadfast adherence to the conviction that what is not thoroughly understood cannot be intelligently improved.<sup>5</sup> Great emphasis has been placed, therefore, upon stimulating local groups to master the pertinent facts.

The Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania likewise is concerned to study and improve both the local and the state-wide public social services. Founded in 1912, this organization has a membership of approximately seven thousand. Its program lays emphasis upon the dissemination of factual material and the mobilization of public opinion in behalf of social legislation and improved standards of administration. During the sessions of the state legislature it publishes a weekly bulletin that enables interested citizens to keep currently informed about social welfare proposals. Study projects and promotional activities are carried on under the guidance of its Family and Child Welfare Division, its Mental Hygiene Com-

<sup>4</sup> The long series of annual reports of this organization throws much interesting light on the community organization process (see Alice Metta Johnson, "The Methods of Work of the State Charities Aid Association of New York, 1872-87" (1939); and Marcus Wesley Scherbacher, "The Methods of Work of the State Charities Aid Association of New York, 1898-1917" (M.A. theses, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, 1939).

<sup>5</sup> See excerpts from addresses delivered at the seventieth anniversary meeting, Doc. 15-A, pp. 571-77.

mittee, and its Penal Affairs Committee. One of its widely publicized undertakings was the development of a ten-year program of child welfare for Pennsylvania. This project illustrated a method of procedure that has much to recommend it: the development of a series of very specific objectives and the allocating of a period of time during which efforts throughout the area will focus upon the attainment of those objectives.

In most of the states there is some kind of central authority responsible for the maintenance of acceptable standards of care in the state institutions. In addition, the state authority may have certain supervisory powers with respect to institutional and noninstitutional welfare services administered by local governments. A question might therefore be raised as to the need for a private, nonofficial body, such as the State Charities Aid Association or the Public Charities Association. Why should a private agency be needed that presumably duplicates, at least so far as the visitorial function is concerned, a duty that is imposed by statute upon official public agencies? Why should citizens support a private agency to study problems that are presumably constantly under the surveillance of officials supported by the taxpayer, such as the governor, the legislators, the executive branch of the state government, and the local elected officials?

Such questions are very much like the more familiar question: "Why should we support a private family or child welfare agency in a community that has a well-organized public assistance agency?" And the answer, in both instances, is much the same. The functions undertaken by the private organizations are, or should be, different from those of the public agency. Moreover, the methods available to the private agency enable it to undertake activities that would be promptly denounced as "political" if sponsored by a public organization. It is difficult, for example, for a public welfare agency to publicize overcrowding in state institutions; for the political party currently out of power may seize upon such statements and use them to embarrass the existing administration. It is also doubtful whether any public functional agency would be well advised to promote a ten-year legislative program in its own field. The complexion of both the legislative and the executive branches of government would probably change several times during that period. But the ten-year program might be identified in the public mind with the administration that was in power when it was launched. In that case the program, however sound, might encounter the opposition of those who wish to discredit the work of a preceding administration. Likewise, some political administrations are reluctant to urge new programs of social welfare, possibly because they are more interested in balancing the budget or in reducing taxes than in

providing services for which a recognized need exists. If an articulate unofficial group organizes opinion in behalf of new programs, however, the administration itself may be moved to espouse them in the belief that, as political leaders, they are thereby proving themselves responsive to public sentiment. There is ample evidence to indicate that for such reasons as these an unofficial organization of interested citizens is in a position to make outstanding contributions in protecting and developing the public social services. This will undoubtedly be the case so long as ignorance and apathy continue to characterize the attitudes of large numbers of citizens and of elected public officials toward these problems.

It should not be assumed, however, that a voluntary state-wide agency of the type described above should be organized in each state. In fact, it is clear that in many states such a development would be impractical at present. New York and Pennsylvania are both populous and wealthy. In many of the states, particularly those with sparse populations and low per capita incomes, it is difficult to finance private agencies that are engaged in the tangible task of providing direct care for needy families and neglected children. In such localities it would be even more difficult to raise funds for programs of community organization, which almost always have much less to offer in the way of direct and immediate appeal.

Although there are a number of additional states in which successful state-wide agencies might be organized, it is clear that in many of them some other answer must be found. In certain states the answer seems to be the state conference of social work. California, for example, has a large and vigorous state conference which undertakes some of the functions, with respect to protection and development of the public social services, that might elsewhere be performed by a specialized state-wide private agency. Since state conferences of social work do not usually require professional qualifications for membership, they resemble the state-wide private agencies in that they provide a meeting ground for joint action on the part of lay citizens and professional social workers.

In addition to the private state-wide agencies that concern themselves with a broad range of social welfare problems, there are many other state-wide private organizations which undertake a program of community organization with respect to a specific field of work. Among the best known are the groups working solely on problems of mental hygiene, social hygiene, or tuberculosis. For example, in 1943, it was reported<sup>6</sup> that twenty-seven state-wide organizations or committees were working in the field of mental hygiene. Moreover, there are a number of important agencies

<sup>6</sup> *Social Work Year Book*, 1943, p. 332.

that carry on a service program on a state-wide basis, with community organization as a secondary function. This is a pattern frequently encountered in the field of child care, particularly in the states of the Middle West. These programs are in some instances carried on under sectarian, and in other cases under nonsectarian, auspices. Some of these agencies have, in the course of giving care to large numbers of children, succeeded also in building up sentiment favoring the codification of state laws relating to children, developed support for improved adoption laws, etc.

Finally, there should be mentioned the state-wide professional organizations. In a few places, state-wide chapters of the American Association of Social Workers have been formed, usually for the purpose of unifying sentiment with respect to state-wide welfare problems. A much more extensive development has occurred on a state-wide basis in the field of health. State organizations of nurses, of medical practitioners, and of public health officials are active in many states. Some of them, of course, have been concerned primarily to protect professional standards. Some, however, have devoted attention to the improvement of health services, both locally and at the state level.

The methods used by these state-wide voluntary agencies are not essentially different from those used by similar groups in local communities. The problem of distance usually means that bulletins, circulars, reports, and journals must to some extent be substituted for the committee meetings and personal conferences which are so extensively used by local groups. State-wide agencies also are likely to lean heavily upon the organization of local committees in specific communities to further their purposes. Also their contacts with legislators and with key officials, such as the director of the state welfare department, are likely to be more frequent and more personal than can be made by most local groups. Few, if any, of the local planning organizations have been as successful as the best of the state-wide voluntary agencies in formulating clear-cut programs and in focusing attention upon these objectives until some measure of success is achieved.

#### THE STATE CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

State conferences of social work have been organized and are functioning in forty-six of the states. Usually no qualifications are required for membership other than a very flexible one, such as "interest in problems of social welfare." This means that the participation of lay citizens is desired. Originally, in many states the conference membership consisted

predominantly of nonprofessional persons, and leadership was provided by the lay members of agency boards, by practicing physicians who were concerned to improve social conditions, by women associated with the visitation of public eleemosynary institutions, and similar types of public spirited individuals.<sup>7</sup> As the years passed, however, professional social workers affiliated with the state conferences in increasing numbers. As a result, the interests of the conferences tended to become more and more specialized. The programs at the meetings reflected this shift, and there was a resulting decline in lay participation. At present it is estimated<sup>8</sup> that professional social workers account for at least three-fourths of all memberships in most of the state conferences. Conspicuous exceptions are the conferences in Nebraska, North Carolina, and Wisconsin, where lay membership predominates. The numbers of members vary widely from state to state. The conferences in some of the less populous states may have only one hundred members. In California and New York the membership usually exceeds three thousand. The registration at the annual meetings, however, sometimes considerably exceeds the number of year-round paid members. For this and other reasons the scope of influence of the state conference is often wider than its roll of paid memberships would suggest.

The programs of the conferences vary considerably from state to state. In some states the conference is committed, either by tradition or by its constitution, to function as a forum only—in other words, participation in the rough-and-tumble of legislative activity is sedulously avoided. Even the adoption of resolutions is by some conferences regarded as inappropriate, and in such instances the organization limits itself to an annual meeting, which may in some cases be supplemented by allied activities of an educational character. It should be pointed out, however, that even the conferences which thus choose to limit themselves to discussion and to clarification of problems and objectives are, nevertheless, participating in one essential phase of the community organization process. The discussions at the annual meetings, by promoting an understanding of unmet needs within the state and by bringing together individuals and groups with common interests, prepare the way for the next steps in the process. The question then inevitably arises: What group will take the next steps? In such states as New York, where a state-wide voluntary agency has demonstrated its capacity to formulate and promote programs, there is a

<sup>7</sup> Bernice Shield, *History of the Virginia Conference of Social Work from 1900 to 1942* (published by the Virginia Conference of Social Work, September, 1942).

<sup>8</sup> Kathryn Close, "Conferences of Social Work," *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, p. 137.



basis for believing that the clarifications and agreements reached through discussion will receive further attention. In most of the states, however, there is no second organization that is committed to the promotion of social welfare objectives. In such states, if the conference assumes no responsibility for next steps, it is entirely likely that no next steps will be taken in the near future.

A recognition of this dilemma has prompted a number of the state conferences to embark upon a program of promotional activities. At present, about half of them work in this area, though the intensity and the effectiveness of the effort naturally vary considerably from state to state. In California the conference has long been very active in promoting its objectives. In fact, its program combines the functions which, in New York State, are handled by two organizations—the state conference and the State Charities Aid Association. Perhaps no state conference thus far has an equally impressive record of distinguished annual meetings, supplemented by continuous, state-wide promotional activity. In Missouri the conference changed its name to “State Association for Social Welfare” because it wished to be clearly committed to a program of action.

Other things being equal, the program of action is likely to be most effective in those states in which the conference is able to employ a full-time staff. In a number of the states the promotion of new or improved social services by the state conference is in the hands of volunteer committees, the personnel of which changes frequently. The activity is therefore somewhat intermittent in character. Elsewhere the conference may do little more than adopt resolutions at its annual meeting. Nevertheless, the trend appears to be in the direction of increased concern to engage in specific promotional activities. In an earlier day the need for a forum to discuss common problems was urgently felt. Since that time there has been a phenomenal increase in the amount of material available in print. Hence, though forums are still important and useful, many people believe that they no longer constitute a complete and adequate program for a live state conference.

The educational aspect of community organization continues to play a dominant role in an increasing number of the state conferences. In 1939, study courses or institutes were offered by the conferences in nineteen states,<sup>9</sup> these institutes usually being held on the days immediately preceding the opening of the annual meeting. Although these study courses place emphasis upon subjects immediately useful in the field of treatment, they also frequently include sessions on subjects germane to the process of

<sup>9</sup> Mary B. Holsinger, “Conferences in Social Work,” *Social Work Year Book*, 1939, p. 94.

community organization, such as public relations and county welfare administration. The sessions are attended by persons employed in social agencies, many of whom have had little or no opportunity for professional education, and in some cases by board members and other interested lay citizens. Thus these institutes, which often draw their enrolment from rural counties throughout the state, are a means of awakening many persons in key positions to a realization that community organization is one of their responsibilities.

The organization of regional meetings throughout the state has also provided a means of expanding the educational activities of state conferences. Fully half of the conferences have initiated movements of this type. The number of regional meetings varies, of course, depending upon the size and population of the state and the financial resources available. At least one state conference has been able to arrange no less than fourteen regional meetings in the intervals between the annual state-wide meetings. These conferences reach many people who are unable to travel to the annual meeting. Potentially, at least, they insure some measure of concerted action from all sections of the state on questions which the conference has selected for preferred attention.

In states with large urban centers, considerable difficulty has sometimes been experienced in getting rural and urban delegates to pull together. Too often the members from rural areas believe that their problems receive inadequate attention and fear that the urban delegates will dominate in the formulation of policies. In Illinois the creation of eleven regional organizations, one of which is urban Chicago, has contributed to the abatement of these negative attitudes. Since the state-wide committees are made up of representatives of the regions, Chicago, which contains roughly half of the population of the state, is thus definitely under-represented, for it usually has only one member on each of the state-wide committees. This arrangement meets with the approval of the Chicago social workers, most of whom believe that representation on the basis of population is much less important than the fostering of a spirit of unity throughout the state. The evidence suggests that this view is sound and that regional representation has resulted in improved relationships between the rural counties and the metropolis.

Financial problems have proved to be a retarding force in the development of the state conferences. Most of the conferences depend upon small annual membership fees, varying in size from \$1.00 to \$3.00. A few have managed to obtain substantial contributions from interested individuals, from community chests within the state, or from foundations, while some

have received help, either in cash or in the form of contributed services, from public or private social agencies. In general it appears that support from such sources has had a debilitating effect upon the conferences that have accepted it. Financial support from a private agency is probably less objectionable, however, than a subsidy from a public department. In Illinois the state conference received for a considerable period about 70 per cent of its budget from the state Board of Public Welfare Commissioners. During this period the membership of the Illinois conference was one of the smallest in any of the populous states. Some of the leaders believed that the subsidy from the public agency was largely responsible for this lack of interest and participation. Obviously, so long as the conference continued to be an appendage of a state agency, it was in no position to take a forthright stand on public welfare questions. After considerable study of the matter the Illinois conference decided to cut loose from the public subsidy. This decision apparently released a great deal of dormant vitality. Within a short period the membership tripled, a full-time executive secretary was employed, and a regional organization covering the entire state was developed. Although the Illinois conference continues to get some help from a private source, the plan is to make the organization completely self-supporting at the earliest possible date. The members appear to believe that maximum effectiveness will be achieved only when reliance upon outside support is no longer necessary.

Ordinarily, in the United States the existence of even a few agencies with similar objectives leads to the creation of a national organization. It is therefore surprising that the state conferences have not banded together into some kind of national association. There is, of course, a National Conference of Social Work,<sup>10</sup> but it is an independent organization not organically related to the various state conferences. Actually, up to the present, co-operation among the state conferences has been very limited in extent. In a few cases joint meetings have been held by conferences in adjoining states; also, since 1924, there has been an informal organization of state conference secretaries. This group convenes at the time of the National Conference to discuss common problems and, in addition, holds some regional meetings. The organization receives help and encouragement from the National Conference staff, which assists in facilitating interchange of experience among the member-secretaries by arranging meetings and by distributing material, such as, for example, a list of the national agencies that are prepared to supply conference speakers on request.

Whether any important gains would result from an organic relation-

<sup>10</sup> See below, pp. 578-80.

ship among the various state conferences and the National Conference is a debatable question. Obviously, a network of state conferences might prove to be a great asset in promoting federal legislation. Since some of the state conferences prefer not to engage in promotional activity, however, it seems unlikely that they could all be brought into a national organization that proposed to operate in that area. Moreover, the National Conference itself does not at present undertake to advocate specific social programs. Hence there appears to be at present no persuasive reason why, under existing arrangements, a closer relationship among the conferences would be productive. On the other hand, the total membership of the state conferences exceeds thirty thousand. Because of the wide geographic coverage of these memberships, the potential influence of the group, if united, would be considerable. Union merely for the sake of union, however, would be pointless. Unless there was clear agreement on purposes and methods, it would perhaps be better for the state conferences to continue to operate as at present, with each one determining for itself the nature and scope of its efforts.

#### THE PUBLIC STATE-WIDE SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY

Considerable variation prevails in the names of the various state-wide public welfare authorities. Perhaps those most commonly used are state "Department of Public Welfare," state "Department of Social Welfare," or state "Department of Social Security," although numerous variants occur, as, for example, "Department of Institutions and Agencies." One reason for the difference in names is that the scope of the activities of the state welfare authorities varies from state to state.

In the nineteenth century the states that created welfare authorities usually intrusted them only with the power to visit or inspect the state eleemosynary institutions. Later some states expanded the authority of the state welfare board by making it an executive agency with power to administer the state institutions. Not until the present century, however, was there a movement to charge the state welfare authority with responsibility for supervising local welfare services. This movement met with resistance, and progress was, accordingly, very slow. Although, in general, state legislatures were willing to give the state welfare department some powers with respect to local child welfare services, both public and private, there was great reluctance about carrying this principle over into other fields, such as almshouse administration and outdoor relief. Hence it is a fair generalization to say that, up to the decade of the 1930's, the principle of state supervision of local welfare services had by no means

been generally accepted. Such limited state supervision as had been authorized was, in addition, often very inadequately financed, with the result that attention had to be focused upon preventing the grossest forms of abuse rather than upon stimulating the development of constructive programs.

General acceptance of the principle of state supervision of local welfare services was a development of the 1930's. The grave economic depression necessitated the appropriation of state funds in a number of the states to assist local governments in caring for the unemployed. Often new agencies were created for this purpose, at both the state and the local levels. Legislatures proved to be unwilling to grant state funds to local political subdivisions without retaining some power to oversee the expenditure of the money. Hence the state authority was commonly given power to formulate rules and regulations and to take necessary steps to enforce the observance of these rules. This meant, in most instances, the employment of a state supervisory staff to visit and inspect the offices of the local authorities administering unemployment relief.

The appropriation of federal funds in 1932 to assist the states and their local political subdivisions in caring for the unemployed gave impetus to the trend toward state supervision. The Emergency Relief Division of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which administered the first federal relief act, was unwilling to recommend the lending of federal funds to a state unless the state was prepared to give assurance that the money would be properly expended in the local units of government. Through its field agents, the R.F.C. was thus able to stimulate the organization of a supervisory staff in many of the states to which it allotted funds. The second federal relief act, which was administered by a new agency—the Federal Emergency Relief Administration—provided for grants to the states rather than loans. Moreover, the act specifically authorized the administrator to prescribe such rules and regulations as would insure the effective use of the grants in the states. Thus the broad powers conferred upon the federal authority by the new act insured the acceptance of the principle of state supervision throughout the country, with respect to the particular welfare service which at that time engrossed public attention.

The unemployment relief acts were always regarded, however, as temporary measures. Doubtless, that is one of the reasons why the administration of unemployment relief was usually intrusted to a new temporary agency rather than to the established welfare department of the state. But the Social Security Act in 1935 introduced an element of permanence

into the new relationships that had sprung up between the federal government and the states and between the states and their local political subdivisions. It was clear that federal funds would henceforth be available on a permanent basis for certain types of beneficiaries, such as the needy aged and widows with minor children, and that administration could therefore no longer be intrusted to temporary agencies. Moreover, the terms of the act were such that supervision by the state authority could be enforced. Each state desiring a grant-in-aid was required to submit a plan to the federal authority for approval. In this way the central authority could make sure that the state plan included adequate provision for supervision.<sup>11</sup> Thus, with respect to the so-called special forms of relief—Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, and Aid to Dependent Children—and with respect to federally aided child welfare services, state supervision of local administration appears to be permanent.

With respect to the other public social services, however, great variation prevails from state to state. In some states, general home relief is supervised by the state authority on much the same basis as the federally aided services, while, in others, state supervision is merely nominal. In still other states little or nothing is done in the field of general home relief, or, if there is a program, it is financed and controlled locally without supervision from the state. Hence, though the principle of state supervision appears to be firmly established, it does not at present apply to all public social services.

Thus the approach the state department can make to the local community is determined by the scope of its powers. Obviously, the department that has power to supervise most or all of the local social services (outdoor and indoor relief, child welfare services, probation, etc.) is in a very different position from the authority with powers only over the federally aided special forms of relief. In the one case the state authority has a defined relationship to the administrators of all local services and can help to formulate fairly comprehensive plans for the local community. In the other case the state authority enjoys status only with one or two local welfare programs and must rely upon the cultivation of voluntary relationships with other local and state authorities if integration in treatment and planning is to be achieved. In most states statutory provisions do not at present impose a general responsibility on the state authority to

<sup>11</sup> The federal statute itself required that there be provision either for administration or for supervision by a single state agency (Pub. 271 [74th Cong.], Title I, Sec. 2a; Title IV, Sec. 402a; Title V Sec. 503a, 513a; Title X, Sec. 1002a).

approach the problems of local political subdivisions from the standpoint of their total needs and services. In lieu of wide obligations to study the total organization of the community, the state authority is commonly intrusted only with responsibility to see that certain specific services are well administered. The result is that in most states the central authority has a limited kind of approach to the problems of the community.

The effectiveness of the state authority in the development of the local services also depends, to a very considerable degree, upon the financial arrangements authorized by the state legislature. If the state participates in the financing of the local services, provision will ordinarily be made for state supervision of the local programs. The state may also require that the local authorities meet certain prescribed standards in order to qualify for state aid. Where this is the case, the representatives of the state authority are usually accorded a respectful hearing in the local political subdivisions. Since the tradition of local self-government is very strong in this country, however, the state authority may easily defeat its own purposes if it exercises its powers arbitrarily. Local boards and local elected officials expect the state authority to insist upon conformity with regulations issued under powers granted by the state legislature. Often they are very resentful, however, if it appears that these powers are being utilized to impose upon the local community a type of program which, in their opinion, is not suited to local needs and is not required by law.

The experience during the 1930's, when state and federal funds were granted to local authorities for unemployment relief, threw much light on this interesting problem. The arbitrary attitudes of the state authority and the incessant changing of rules and regulations sometimes engendered in the local communities a deep hostility that was reflected, some years later, in the pressures brought to bear upon state legislatures to curb the powers of the state authority. On the other hand, local governments can no longer expect to be completely free to do as they see fit. Some of them continue to entertain medieval points of view with respect to the care of the poor, and in such instances the state authority would be remiss if it did not insist upon compliance with the minimum standards authorized by law. The experience to date suggests that the power to grant or to withhold funds is a necessary and desirable arrangement if the state authority is to be of maximum service in helping to develop local welfare programs. But it is also clear that this new power does not relieve the state authority of the need to use the time-honored educational approach in its dealings with local governments. The state authority can insist upon compliance

with provisions authorized by law; but, if it wishes to use its position to improve the total social program of the community, it must establish the kinds of relationships that rest, not upon coercion, but upon intellectual assent and free co-operation.

It is also clear that a state authority, even though it has no funds to subsidize local services, is not necessarily without influence. The record shows that in some states the influence of the state authority has been important in effecting improvements in local services even where funds were not available for grants to the local communities. In such instances the effectiveness of the state department is dependent upon the quality of statesmanship of its personnel.

In general, the state supervisory staff consists of agents who travel from county to county in the interest of carrying out the purposes of the state department. Various titles are used to describe these employees, such as "district supervisor," "field representative," "field agent," etc. Ordinarily, each agent is responsible for supervising the work in a group of counties that are geographically contiguous. Occasionally, urban counties in widely separated parts of the state may be combined into a single district for purposes of supervision. In such instances the state department operates on the theory that urban problems are different from those commonly encountered in rural areas and should, for that reason, be set apart for special consideration.

There is at present a wide range in the kinds of activities which these supervisors are expected to undertake. Hence there is considerable variation in the qualifications needed to perform the assignment satisfactorily. Presumably, minimum standards of professional education and experience will be required of all applicants. Unless the state merit system functions badly, most of the successful applicants should be qualified to determine in their districts whether the local governments are observing the provisions of the law and are adhering to the rules and regulations issued by the central authority. But, of course, routine inspections of such a character leave most of the welfare problems of the community completely untouched. If the state authority expects its supervisors to function creatively in the counties at the community organization level, more than ordinary care must be exercised in the selection of these agents. To some extent the capacity to engage in community organization activity may be revealed by the written examination. But many of the intangible attributes that are of basic importance can be appraised accurately only in the oral examination or in a thorough and careful placement interview. The



objective in these personal contacts is to determine whether the applicant has the aptitudes and attitudes needed in the guiding of the community organization process.

Although it is difficult to provide an adequate inventory of the aptitudes and attitudes needed, a few directives have now come to be widely recognized. It is essential, in the first place, that the field agent have an aptitude for quick and accurate appraisal of community needs and community resources. The inquiries he makes in the community will elicit a variety of responses. He is therefore obliged to differentiate among these responses, seeking to discard those that are unreliable and to discover the range within which accuracy probably falls. The case worker who deals with transients is obliged to accomplish his objectives in a very few short contacts. Similarly, the traveling field agent is obliged to base his judgments on a limited number of penetrating observations. He cannot remain to study the community in painstaking detail; hence he must gather what is at hand and quickly evaluate what he has found. Other things being equal, this capacity should be most fully developed in those who have had a thorough grounding in methods of social investigation and have had, in addition, arealistic experience in administering a public welfare program—perhaps preferably at the county level.

It is also important that the traveling field agent have an aptitude for case work and a good background of experience in that field. In the rural counties particularly, there is often a dearth of treatment resources and a meager local experience in dealing with problem cases. In many instances the traveling field agent represents the only resource to which the local board and staff can turn for advice. If the field agent is equipped to provide the needed advice, the local people develop an appreciation for the quality of help he is able to bring to them. This increases local respect for the leadership provided by the state and paves the way for the development of co-operative undertakings in the local community.

The present situation with respect to personnel in the public social services provides further evidence that case work skill is an important qualification for traveling field agents. Although, according to the best available estimates, there are more than one hundred thousand persons employed in social work positions in the United States, not more than 10 or 15 per cent of this number have had the benefit of a professional education. Moreover, unless the professional schools are able to recruit and train larger numbers of students, the hope of remedying this situation in the near future appears to be very slight. Although most of the professional schools are able and willing to increase their enrolment, they en-

counter many difficulties in recruiting promising students. Chief of these is the very low salary scale prevailing in the public social services in most of the states. Students with four years of college already behind them naturally hesitate to invest two additional years in order to qualify for a position that pays little, if any, better than jobs they can easily get without any further investment in education. This is a serious dilemma. It explains why a large proportion of the county welfare offices are manned by persons with little or no professional education. At present it is impossible to predict just how long this situation may be expected to continue. But in the meantime it is clear that many of the people in the county offices will need and will appreciate sound advice relative to cases they do not know how to handle. The state authority will greatly enhance its prestige if it sends to the counties field agents who are equipped to meet this demand. The rendering of concrete services in the community will put the field agent in a position to initiate later some frank discussions of local problems and local needs.

The attitudes of the field agent also provide an index of his capacity to serve the counties. Of basic importance is a willingness to start with any community at its own level. In all probability the field agent has a progressive point of view with respect to social and economic questions. In his work he may have been accustomed to modern methods of social treatment and to an abundance of social resources. But in some of the counties he may encounter very reactionary points of view, a completely negative attitude toward "coddling the poor," and a dearth of treatment resources. Is he a big enough person to bridge the gulf between his own background and that of the community to which he is assigned? Will he relapse into acceptance of the community's die-hardism, or will he seek patiently for the vulnerable spots in its armor of ignorance and indifference? Certainly, a patronizing approach would definitely end the agent's potential usefulness in the community. Dogmatic preachments, even though they be charged with sound doctrine, are likewise worse than ineffectual. If the community is at the basket-giving level of thinking with respect to relief problems, the field agent must be willing to start at that point. Perhaps in time he may be able to help the leaders to see that scientific budgeting is superior to the alternating feasts and famines for which the basket-givers are unwittingly responsible. And from there he may be able to go on to the development of other concerns, such as an interest in the infectious diseases in the families. It is a slow climb, but the agent who is not willing to start on the first rung of the ladder is likely to find that his community has not followed him. Willingness to start at the community's level

of thinking does not imply acceptance of the so-called "passivity" theory of community organization. It means, rather, a recognition of the fact that new developments and improvements must stem from and be related to the concepts which the community's leaders already understand and accept.

The field agent should also have the capacity to stick to a plan of action until he has either advanced the plan or discovered that it requires modification. Presumably, in each county he will work out, in co-operation with local welfare authorities and other interested citizens, some short-run objectives for the community. In addition, where the situation is favorable, he may perhaps also assist in formulating some long-run objectives. Once agreement has been reached with respect to either type of objective, it is important that there be some measure of stability and continuity in the promotional efforts. Frequent changes in objectives are confusing to local leaders and for that reason tend to immobilize their efforts. Many illustrations of the destructive effects of rapid shifts in purposes, policies, methods, and objectives were provided by the experiences of the 1930's. The traveling field agents were by no means responsible for the kaleidoscopic changes that characterized that period. In fact, they themselves, in trying to keep abreast of changes introduced by the state and federal authorities, were often no less confused than the local communities they were attempting to serve. Much of this instability was unavoidable in a decade characterized by the rapid emergence of new concepts of state and federal responsibility. Now, however, the situation is different. Some of the basic public social services rest upon a firm foundation. In all the states, relationships between a central state-wide authority and the local services have been established in one form or another. Thus there is reason to believe that we have entered upon a period in which there will be increasing stability of policy both at the federal and at the state levels. If this proves to be the case, the traveling field agents of the state department will have an improved opportunity to assist the local communities in problems of community organization. For this reason it is important that these agents have the qualities of persistence that will insure continuity in their own efforts in the communities they serve.

The importance of seeking these particular attitudes and skills in selecting field agents to represent the state department becomes apparent if one pauses to reflect upon the implications of their jobs. It is clear that in hundreds of rural counties little or nothing will be done to mobilize and co-ordinate local altruistic activities unless leadership is exercised by the local public welfare bureau. Likewise, it is certain that social planning will

not be undertaken on any kind of promising basis unless some guidance is provided from outside the community. Yet it is well known that there is need for both types of activity in large numbers of communities throughout the country. Experience also suggests that the organization of councils of social agencies, which has been the usual approach in urban situations, is not likely to prove successful in many of the rural areas. Perhaps here and there a private functional agency can assume leadership in striving for improved organization of the community. But in most places this responsibility will either be assumed by the local welfare department or go by default. And the alertness of the local public agency to its opportunities in this area will, in turn, be determined in large measure by the quality and continuity of the influence of the state authority. Hence the field agent, who interprets the state authority and the community to each other, is the vital factor upon which, in large measure, the strength of this relationship depends.

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DOCUMENT 15-A  
EXCERPTS FROM SPEECHES, 70TH ANNIVERSARY  
MEETING, STATE CHARITIES AID ASSOCIA-  
TION OF NEW YORK, 1942<sup>12</sup>

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE GOVERNMENT?<sup>13</sup>

. . . . .

CONFIDENCE THE KEYNOTE

The general tenor of the session was one of confidence—confidence that the Association has given a good account of itself in its first seventy years; confidence that the same unchanging purpose with an ever changing program will be a notable factor in that refinement of governmental action, that inevitable development of an increasing social security, and that blossoming and fruition of democracy in the state of New York which will increasingly demand the admiration and grateful appreciation of its people for another seven decades and many more.

Obviously, in a single session only the most meager reference could be made to any of the activities of the S.C.A.A., and many of them could not even be mentioned. If, however, all the definite achievements of the S.C.A.A. could have been enumerated and explained, even that would tell only half the story. What any part of the government of the State or its municipalities is and does, at any given time, is the net result of many influences and forces from many diverse quarters and for many diverse objectives. *In that sum total of contending factors, the S.C.A.A. has been for seventy years a continuous, consistent, and influential participant.*

VITAL AID, REVITALIZING FORCE

Aside from what it has done specifically, the fact of its existence and its purpose has exerted a powerful, continuous influence in improving the tone and quality of governmental action. The S.C.A.A. at all times has contended for public policies based on the full examination of the facts and against the sway of prejudice and emotion. It has steadfastly upheld a

<sup>12</sup> The seventieth anniversary of the States Charities Aid Association of New York was celebrated at a meeting held May 4, 1942. The proceedings of the meeting appear in the State Charities Aid Association *News* for May, 1942 (Vol. XXXI, No. 8). These excerpts were taken from the account of the anniversary meeting and the speeches made at the gathering.

<sup>13</sup> By Homer Folks, secretary, State Charities Aid Association of New York.

confidence that good administration will gain public support and approval better than bad administration; that the great majority of the people of the State wish their welfare services to be humane; that they believe that public health efforts can bring extraordinarily useful results; and that the taxpayers of the State are willing to pay for whatever may be necessary for humanitarian purposes.

#### DEEDS AS WELL AS WORDS

These convictions the Association has set forth by word and, more vigorously and effectively even, by deeds. There have been many evidences recently that the people of the state of New York will never again tolerate slipshod, wasteful, or partisan political methods in the state departments of health, welfare, mental hygiene, and kindred fields; that there is a solid background and foundation for progressive policies and courageous administration in all these fields. If such is the case, the S.C.A.A. certainly, as the one state-wide voluntary agency which has consistently and somewhat strenuously urged these points of view for seventy years, may justly feel that it has made no small contribution to that result. *Every one of its members and supporters and every reader of the S.C.A.A. "News" may properly claim a share in that result.*

. . . . .

There are two quite different lines of procedure in promoting the achievement of maximum results by democratic agencies of government.

The first line of approach may be termed "direct action"; it aims at getting the largest results in the shortest period of time. It tends to avoid discussion. It is irked by the delays of established procedures and of securing an informed public opinion. It depends upon either a "blitzkrieg" attack or the subtle use of effective political influences. It is not concerned as to the possible effect upon political life of the use of such methods.

The other line of approach consciously adopts democratic processes in reaching democratic results. It painstakingly collects the pertinent facts. It uses all suitable avenues of approach to public opinion. It clarifies its objectives and places them with full supporting data before responsible authorities, legislative and administrative. It welcomes, rather than avoids, any actual test of public opinion. *It is deeply concerned that all its activities should tend to refine and strengthen the characteristic qualities of a democratic government.*

The S.C.A.A. has unfailingly followed the latter course. For instance, when boards of supervisors of counties hesitated to make appropriations

for tuberculosis hospitals, the Association secured the passage of a law enabling boards of supervisors to submit the proposed appropriation to popular vote. It aided its local committees in the presentation of the subject matter to the voters. Such referendums were held in twelve counties in the three-year period, 1914-16 inclusive. In every county a majority of the votes were affirmative. In only one county was the issue at all close as between the "Yes" and "No" votes. In numerous instances, the vote was two to one, or even three to one.

Likewise, since state bond issues must be authorized in each instance by a vote of the people, the Association aided in presenting to the people on three occasions the actual needs of the state hospitals for the insane and other state institutions for new construction. An intensive informational effort was made in every part of the State. The majority in every case was on the affirmative side. Similarly, bond issues repayable within ten years for the State's contribution to emergency relief were explained and actively supported by the S.C.A.A. throughout the State, and, here too, the result in every case was affirmative.

Whenever a public official has, in the opinion of the Association, been unjustly criticized for incurring expenditures or for taking administrative actions which seemed to the Association sound, it has actively and publicly defended such actions.

It is our considered opinion that democratic processes and democratic methods have been in no case injured and in most cases have been very definitely strengthened and made more secure by the Association's efforts to secure useful results by following methods in keeping with the democratic principle.

## PUBLIC RELIEF<sup>14</sup>

### CONSTITUTION RECOGNIZES OBLIGATION

The last seventy years have seen a striking transformation in the concept of governmental responsibility for the needy. In the 1870's government provided little more than wretched and demoralizing care in almshouses. In the 1930's government cared for up to one-fifth of the population of the State, and cared for them remarkably adequately, in their own homes or in hospitals or institutions, according to their needs. Today the Constitution of the State itself declares that the relief and care of the needy are matters of public concern and shall be provided for by the legis-

<sup>14</sup> By Elsie M. Bond, director, Legislative Information Service, S.C.A.A.



lature. It authorizes the use of State funds for the aid, care, and support of the needy and for protection, by insurance or otherwise, against the hazards of unemployment, sickness, and old age.

When the S.C.A.A. started its work, almshouse care was the major form of public relief, and outdoor relief was relatively unimportant. Both were inadequate and badly administered. The Association at first devoted its energies largely to improvement of almshouse care and to the removal of children, the sick, and the insane from the almshouses. The early reports of the Association frequently recommended that outdoor relief should either be improved or abolished. New York City, following the policy of throwing the baby out because the bath water was dirty, abolished outdoor relief; but elsewhere in the State, outdoor relief was neither abolished nor improved. It was not until 1925 that the Association, realizing that the need for relief was increasing, began an all-out effort to improve outdoor relief. Its first objective was a modern, socialized law.

#### MODERN PUBLIC WELFARE LAW

In 1927 the Association organized a joint committee representing the state Department of Social Welfare, the county and city relief officials, and the S.C.A.A., which drafted the public welfare law and secured its enactment by the legislature in 1929. This new law set the stage for the future development of a modern public welfare system. It made home relief, instead of almshouse care, the basic form of relief. Its new phraseology and constructive provisions as to objectives and methods helped to create a new psychology quite different from that prevailing under the old poor law.

In 1930 the Association assisted in drafting and securing the enactment of an old age relief law. This still further liberalized the concept of relief to be provided by local public relief officials and provided state aid for this form of relief and its administration.

#### LEADERSHIP IN UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF

The S.C.A.A. was among the first to realize the relief implications of extensive unemployment. It therefore initiated, in December, 1930, a survey of unemployment and relief in the fifty-nine upstate cities, which was made in co-operation with the state Board of Social Welfare and the state Department of Labor. This revealed widespread unemployment, inadequate relief, chaotic administration, and exhaustion of local relief funds. The Association also made a study of work relief and carried on a

campaign to promote its use as a method of providing for the unemployed. A second survey in the upstate cities, in July, 1931, showed that the situation had grown steadily worse. The Association put before the governor and legislature the clear necessity of state action and state aid to meet the unprecedented unemployment emergency.

In the August, 1931, special session of the legislature, the S.C.A.A. carried on a single-handed and successful fight for an unemployment relief act which would provide state aid for home relief administered by local public welfare officials instead of by newly created emergency agencies. The law, largely drafted by the S.C.A.A., provided also for locally administered work relief, made medical care one of the necessities of life for which state aid would be paid, and authorized the use of state funds for salaries of local personnel.

To assist the state Temporary Emergency Relief Administration in its first months of work, the S.C.A.A. contributed the services of its experienced staff and worked closely with the state emergency agency until its termination in 1937. At the request of the governor, the Association carried on intensive campaigns to secure approval by the voters of large bond issues for unemployment relief in 1932, 1933, 1934, and 1935.

The S.C.A.A. participated actively in the work of the Wardwell Commission on Unemployment Relief and in securing adoption of its recommendations for permanent welfare organization. In 1937, state and local temporary emergency relief agencies were terminated, a permanent system of state aid established—40 per cent for home relief and local welfare salaries and 100 per cent for relief to persons without settlement. Provision was also made for complete reorganization of the state Department of Social Welfare to carry these new responsibilities.

In 1938 the S.C.A.A. drafted and secured acceptance by the Constitutional Convention of a new article on social welfare, which was approved by the voters.

#### PROMOTING PROGRESSIVE LEGISLATION

Throughout the years the Association, as an independent, impartial organization of citizens, not only has worked for good legislation but has led the opposition to unwise legislation. A comparison with legislation in many other states, particularly in the depression period, shows clearly the value and necessity of such opposition. There are times when only an independent nonofficial agency, like the S.C.A.A., can afford to take the lead in fighting legislation which has serious political implications. Such was the case with the bill proposing to establish independent local veteran

relief bureaus, which was strongly and publicly opposed by the Association and was vetoed by the governor in 1935.

Today, as throughout its history, the S.C.A.A. believes that citizen interest and participation are vital to good public welfare administration. Through its county public welfare and children's committees, its publications, and other activities, it seeks to secure widespread, active, and intelligent interest in the governmental public welfare services. For the last fifteen years it has made available to federal, state, and local public welfare officials, local agencies, and S.C.A.A. committees a comprehensive information service on pending welfare legislation which is not available in any other state.

The S.C.A.A. constantly works with state and local officials and members of the legislature on welfare legislation and problems of welfare administration. Because it is recognized as an impartial, unofficial organization with long years of experience and equipped to give expert service, its opinions are respected and its services utilized and valued by legislators and state and local officials.

#### CHANGES IN PUBLIC WELFARE

In the years to come the S.C.A.A. sees opportunities for progress along two lines: first, further improvement of public welfare administration and, second, extension of the social insurances and health services to decrease the need for relief.

#### BUTTRESSING DEMOCRACY BY CITIZEN SERVICE: AN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE DIFFICULT ART OF GOVERNMENT<sup>18</sup>

##### FARSIGHTED LEADERSHIP

Your notable successes have been achieved by an ingenious and extraordinarily fertile technique, by a combination of farsighted leadership on the state level—planning in the broad sense, and, secondly, the motivation of this planning by the power of local committees.

I remember very well some of the episodes to which Dr. Godfrey referred. As he stated, I was in the state Health Department at that time. I remember how your association, through Mr. Folks, took the lead in framing that public health law, and I remember particularly how effectively your machinery was used when that law was attacked. Dr. Biggs had no particular political affiliation, but he was appointed by Governor Glynn;

<sup>18</sup> By C.-E. A. Winslow, Dr. P.H., director, Department of Public Health, School of Medicine, Yale University.

and when a Republican administration under Governor Whitman replaced a Democratic administration, it was all on the cards that this thing should be made more practically useful to the political machine. The leader of the Assembly, the leader of the Senate—I think he is still active in New York today—were all set to go. They had drafted a very ingenious and, on the surface, plausible law which would have got rid of Dr. Biggs and made an opportunity—many opportunities—for the faithful. The Republicans had an overwhelming majority in both houses, and their bill passed the House by an overwhelming majority.

And then Mr. Folks got to work and your societies got to work, and I shall never forget the flood of letters that overwhelmed the capitol. Those senators were afraid to miss a day in their seats for fear the bill should come out of committee, but it never did.

#### RECORD FOR GETTING THINGS DONE

That is one little illustration of the unrivaled influence, the unrivaled record, you have had in getting good things done and in preventing bad things from being done in the health and welfare program of the Empire State.

In some of the literature of the Association a few years ago there was printed a letter signed by six governors of the state of New York: Governors Hughes, Miller, Roosevelt, Smith, White, and Whitman. Two of these gentlemen I did not know. But in considering the other four whom I have known, I should like to ask you whether Governor Hughes, Governor Roosevelt, Governor Smith, and Governor Whitman could ever have conceivably had a unanimous opinion on any subject except the merits of the S.C.A.A. I think not. (Laughter.)

You have, however, contributed to the history of this organization not merely these tremendous concrete services that have been reviewed; you have contributed, I think, also—and perhaps in an even more important degree—a technique, a technique in social service in the broad sense, in demonstrating how enormously influential and how enormously beneficial may be an organization of citizens devoted to criticism, to planning, and to the mobilization of support.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### NATIONAL AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH CO- ORDINATION AND SOCIAL PLANNING

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#### THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

THE principal forum in the field of social welfare is the National Conference of Social Work. Known in an earlier day as the Conference on Charities and Corrections, this organization has had a continuous existence since 1873. It is a membership organization, supported by dues. Although the number of memberships fluctuates, in recent years there have been about seventy-five hundred individual members each year. In addition there are usually about four hundred and fifty organizations that support the Conference by taking out organization memberships.

The annual meeting of the National Conference of Social Work lasts an entire week and is usually held in the late spring or early summer. A system of rotation has been worked out, whereby the meeting moves periodically from one section of the country to another.<sup>1</sup> The attendance at the annual meeting fluctuates considerably, depending upon the distance of the conference city from the older and more populous centers in which social agencies are most numerous. Thus, if the Conference is held in a city on the North Atlantic seaboard, the attendance is likely to be twice as large as in the years when it convenes in the Far West or the South. Although these variations in attendance, ranging from around three thousand to around eight thousand, may involve loss of revenue for the Conference and may thus aggravate the problem of financing the organization, the leaders in the movement are convinced that the resulting gains more than justify these risks. Studies have been made which show that a very large proportion of those who attend the meetings each year live and work within a comparatively short distance from the conference city. Since the Conference is primarily a nation-wide educational movement, it is impor-

<sup>1</sup> The war necessitated some deviation from this established system of rotation.

tant that its benefits be distributed as widely as possible throughout the country.

The Conference meetings cover a very wide range of social welfare interests. The evening sessions are usually devoted to addresses by persons of national or international repute, who discuss problems of broad general interest. During the daytime there are usually a half-dozen or more meetings in progress simultaneously, each devoted to the problems in a particular field. These section meetings,<sup>\*</sup> as they are called, are organized around the following specialized interests: (1) social case work; (2) social group work; (3) community organization; (4) social action; and (5) public welfare administration. Since social problems often do not fit into tight compartments, it is not uncommon for two or more sections to hold some joint sessions during the week. In addition to the meetings arranged by the five sections, there is usually a considerable number of supplementary programs, some of which are arranged by special committees appointed by the Conference, as, for example, the Committee on Refugees, the Committee on Interstate Migration, the Committee on Social Aspects of Housing, etc. Others are arranged by the so-called "associate groups." Most of the associate groups are national organizations which hold their own annual conferences at the same time and in the same place as the National Conference of Social Work. A few schedule their meetings for the two days immediately preceding the Conference to enable their members to attend both conventions. Thus the number of programs held during the conference week reaches an impressive total.

The National Conference of Social Work does not participate directly in the promotion of specific social programs. In fact, the preamble of its constitution specifically states that the Conference "does not formulate platforms." Hence its participation in the community organization process is exclusively in the area of education. In this area, however, it receives a wide hearing. During the week of the annual meeting, many columns of newspaper space are devoted to the Conference. The *New York Times*, for example, usually reports the meetings in considerable detail even when they are held in cities remote from the Atlantic seaboard. Outstanding speakers are quoted at some length, and the public is thus introduced to some of the proposals that are being currently advocated in the field of social welfare. In addition, the Conference publishes each year

<sup>\*</sup> The bylaws provide that the sectional organization "shall be reconsidered by the Executive Committee at intervals of not more than five years and recommendations of such modifications as may be desirable presented at the annual meeting for action by the Conference membership" (Sec. V [b], *By-Laws of the National Conference of Social Work, Inc.*; See *Proceedings of the National Council of Social Work*, 1940, pp. 698-99).

a stout volume of *Proceedings*. This book includes a majority of the outstanding papers and speeches presented during Conference week. The distribution of the *Proceedings* among libraries, colleges, organizations, and individuals insures further dissemination of the ideas, proposals, and points of view expressed at the Conference.

From time to time it has been suggested that the National Conference of Social Work broaden the scope of its activity by undertaking to support or to promote specific programs. Some members have thought that expansion in this direction should be limited to the adoption of resolutions favoring or opposing pending developments in the social welfare field. Others have advocated aggressive efforts to secure the adoption of proposals favored by the membership. It appears, however, that a majority believes the Conference should continue to function exclusively as an educational force. A recent exploration of this question indicated that there is as yet no widespread articulate demand to alter present procedures. Hence it would appear that the National Conference is likely to continue as an important educational influence but that promotional activity at the national level will remain outside the scope of its program.

#### COMMUNITY CHESTS AND COUNCILS, INC.

Local community chests and local councils of social agencies carry major responsibilities with respect to co-ordination of services and social planning, particularly in urban communities. These agencies banded together in 1918 to form a national association. Known originally as the American Association for Community Organization, the national organization subsequently changed its name to Association of Community Chests and Councils and still later adopted its present name—Community Chests and Councils, Inc. The membership includes 475 local community chests and councils of social agencies. These local member-organizations are the primary source of support of the work of the national association.

The community organization activities of this national association are carried on both at the local and at the national level. Perhaps the best known of the services which the national office is prepared to offer to local communities is the direction of local surveys. Periodically, local chests and local councils of social agencies come to the conclusion that there is need for an intensive examination of the social work in the community. Usually the local groups wish to have this evaluation made by outside experts. They believe that local persons might be handicapped by precon-

ceived views and that their conclusions and recommendations would not receive as respectful a hearing as the findings of persons who come from the outside. But it is difficult for a local group to assemble a satisfactory staff to conduct a survey. In many cities a fair-sized staff is required, including a director, a statistician, and a case reader. In addition, the plan may call for the employment of an expert to direct the investigation in each of the specialized functional fields, as, for example, one person to head the survey of health agencies, another to examine the field of child welfare, etc. The local committee is usually not in a position to recruit a diversified staff of this character. Hence, through its field service, Community Chests and Councils, Inc., has arranged to manage surveys for local communities when requested to do so. Usually this service includes advance consultation with the community to determine whether conditions are ripe for instituting a survey. Sometimes the national association advises the community to defer its plans. If the local leaders decide to go ahead with a study, however, the association usually places its facilities at their disposal. As a rule, the national director of the field service assumes responsibility for recruiting the survey staff and also agrees to consult with the staff and with the community leaders during the progress of the investigation. Although the local community chest ordinarily bears the cost of the survey, the investigation is usually not limited to the agencies that participate in the chest. Since the community wishes to obtain an improved understanding of social needs and of the social services available to meet these needs, it is necessary for the survey to include the work of the public agencies. A considerable number of these community surveys have been made in recent years under the guidance of the national association. The written reports resulting from these studies have attracted attention beyond the limits of the community studied, as, for example, in the cases of Providence, Hartford, Kansas City, and Honolulu, and have doubtless stimulated other cities to undertake similar inquiries.

The services offered by the national association to local communities are not limited, of course, to formal surveys. Consultation on specific problems is carried on as a regular service, usually on an informal basis. Some of this advisory work is handled by correspondence. In addition, the various members of the national staff make field visits to the local chests and councils and attempt to assist them in solving their problems. A periodical entitled *Community* is also circulated. A major purpose of this bulletin is to facilitate interchange of experience among chests and councils.



Other publications,<sup>3</sup> some of them formal reports and others informal mimeographed circulars, are also made available as occasion demands.

At the national level, Community Chests and Councils, Inc., offers several kinds of services to its local member-organizations which these agencies would usually not be able to provide for themselves. Among these are the negotiations carried on with other national social agencies and with officials of departments of government. For example, during the decade of the 1930's, when unemployment soared to unprecedented heights, the problem of providing adequate relief was a major issue in almost every community. During this period the national association conferred with responsible officials at the federal level, offered testimony to congressional committees, and in other ways tried to promote arrangements that would insure coverage of the needs which local chests clearly would be unable to finance.

As indicated in chapter xii, the social service exchange is one of the important instrumentalities in community organization at the treatment level. For this reason—and also because the exchange is managed in a majority of cities either by the community chest or by the council of social agencies—Community Chests and Councils, Inc., has accepted responsibility for assisting in the development and improvement of exchange services. A national organization known as the Social Service Exchange Committee operates with its assistance and under its general guidance. Numerous studies have been made by this committee. Bulletins are also published periodically that contain material relating to the problems encountered in the operation of exchanges. In a period when exchanges have faced major readjustments and expansions, a central clearing house through which experiences could be compared has proved to be a very useful asset.

Several times during the year the national association arranges conferences for discussion of current problems in community organization. One of these meetings is usually held during the two days immediately preceding the National Conference of Social Work. A regional meeting in mid-winter is held in the Middle West but is widely attended by chest and council representatives from other sections of the country. Two meetings that afford a somewhat more extensive opportunity for discussion are held in mid-summer. One convenes at Blue Ridge, North Carolina, and the

<sup>3</sup> Some of these publications are based upon statistics collected periodically from member-organizations. Among the reports emanating from this source, three have been especially widely used in local planning: (1) trends in giving; (2) annual analysis of subscriptions; and (3) annual tabulation of chest disbursements by fields of work.

other at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. These conferences, which are called "institutes," usually last one week and attract, in addition to professional employees of local chests and councils, a considerable number of public agency workers and representatives of national functional agencies. Frequently, as a result of the week of discussion, reports are prepared that constitute a kind of platform of objectives to be sought in the period ahead. Document 16-A is a report that was formulated at the Great Lakes Institute held at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, in 1932. Some of the objectives agreed upon at this institute have been achieved. Others have not yet been attained, and, with respect to some of them, opinion may perhaps have changed. Nevertheless, the document illustrates the values inherent in a discussion process that results in the envisaging of specific goals.

Among its other community organization activities at the national level, Community Chests and Councils, Inc., has been greatly concerned to improve the factual basis for social planning. In 1927 it entered into a co-operative arrangement with the University of Chicago to finance and manage an experimental project known as the "Registration of Social Statistics."<sup>4</sup> The fundamental purposes of this project were: (1) to develop uniform schedules for collecting monthly and annual statistical and financial reports from all types of local social agencies, both public and private; (2) to prepare manuals that would assist local agencies in developing satisfactory methods of statistical accounting; (3) to obtain data from each community sufficiently comprehensive to justify the calculation of derived figures, such as dependency rates, per capita expenditures, cost per case, etc.; and (4) to publish monthly and annual reports that would assist the participating communities in their social-planning and budgeting activities. Originally, twenty-nine urban areas were included in the registration area. In each instance an employee of the local chest or council served as the local supervisor of the project. Field supervision was provided by the central office in Chicago. After two and a half years of experimentation, the project was turned over, in 1930, to the United States Children's Bureau. An advisory committee with representation from both of the original sponsoring groups has continued to assist in the further development and expansion of the registration. Although the registration area has expanded slowly, it now includes forty-four communities. In addition, many agencies outside of the area use the reporting methods and the schedules recommended by the central office in Washington. As a result of this development, there is a much sounder basis for local social planning and budgeting than was previously available.

<sup>4</sup> A. W. McMillen, *Measurement in Social Work* (1930).

Since 1932 there has been a phenomenal growth in the volume of statistical material made available by state and federal welfare agencies. These agencies naturally concern themselves for the most part with figures relating to the public social services for which they are responsible. Therefore, in the small number of cities participating in the Registration of Social Statistics, the data obtained through the registration project are more comprehensive than the figures published by the state welfare departments and the Social Security Board; for the Registration undertakes to include all agencies, both public and private, in all fields of social work. Hence it collects certain classes of figures, such as those obtained from hospitals, clinics, group work agencies, etc., that are not included in the publications of the state and federal supervisory agencies.

The national association has likewise been greatly concerned to improve the methodology of fund-raising. It has conducted numerous studies in this area and, in addition, has assisted with promotional activities. Perhaps its most conspicuous promotional undertaking was the organization a few years ago of a national movement known as the "Mobilization for Human Needs." The purpose of the Mobilization is to win support for the campaigns of the local community chests. These campaigns have now been synchronized, with the result that a majority of them occur at the same time each autumn. With the approval of thirty-six national social agencies that are greatly concerned over the success of local chest campaigns (since the local branches of these national agencies are usually supported by the local chests), the national association now organizes each year a group of sponsors for the Mobilization.<sup>5</sup> The sponsors include persons well known throughout the country. For example, among those who have served in recent Mobilizations have been Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Mr. Gerard Swope, Mr. Charles Taft, and others equally prominent in national life. Through the influence of this group, meetings and conferences are held that receive wide publicity through the newspapers and over the air. In fact, the Mobilization draws attention to the chest campaigns on a national scale through use of a wide range of publicity devices. The local drives thus enjoy a kind of reinforcement which most of them have found helpful.

The outbreak of war in 1939 quickly precipitated new problems in fund-raising. Numerous organizations sprang into being to meet war-created relief needs abroad. The entry of the United States into the war in 1941 necessitated additional campaigns for domestic war-relief agencies. In 1942 it became clear that the amounts to be raised for domestic

<sup>5</sup> See above, pp. 430-31.

and foreign war relief in 1943 would exceed the total amounts to be raised by community chests for the support of local agencies. Hence local chests became concerned over the ability of their communities to raise the extra funds required in the emergency without slighting their obligations to local agencies. In an effort to assist the local chests with this problem, the national office instituted several new undertakings. One of these was a series of conversations with national leaders in the labor movements which resulted in the adoption of an agreement relative to labor participation in the control and financing of local war chests.<sup>6</sup> One result of this agreement has been an increase in contributions from organized labor. Another development of the war period was the effort to improve the system of assigning quotas to states and cities. If a national agency needs to raise a large sum, such as \$50,000,000, it immediately faces the problem of state and local quotas. How much of this total should be contributed by Detroit, by Chicago, by Nebraska, by Oregon? Hitherto some communities have complained that the quotas assigned to them in various national drives have been arbitrary and unreasonable and have been fixed without due consideration of local obligations and local capacity to raise money. Under the leadership of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., a national budget committee was organized. A major objective of this committee was to develop improved methods of determining local quotas. In addition, the national budget committee undertook to advise national war-relief agencies concerning the difficult problem of arriving at national campaign goals. With respect to some types of need—for example, relief requirements in a subjugated country where almost the entire population is in danger of starvation—there is almost no limit to the amount that might be spent. But urgent needs exist in other countries also, and domestic work must likewise be financed. Hence, in arriving at the national quota for a specific purpose, such as Greek relief, these other pressing considerations must be borne in mind. In addition, there is need to appraise carefully the money-raising capacities of the states and cities and the current prospects for success in reaching large quotas. Since community chests have had very widespread and continuous knowledge of money-raising ventures throughout the country, the national association offered to place this experience at the disposal of the groups responsible for raising the large funds needed to meet war-created needs. While it is difficult to evaluate the results of this effort, it is clear that a genuine need exists for joint counseling at the national level relative to these kinds of problems. A completely individualized approach would not only jeopard-

<sup>6</sup> See above, pp. 450-51; 504-6.

ize the success of some of the war-relief drives but might also seriously interfere with the support of essential local programs.

Community Chests and Councils, Inc., also played an important role in effecting the organization of the National War Fund. Following the outbreak of the war, local communities were quickly confronted with a variety of appeals to meet war-created needs. In Chicago, for example, between January 1, 1940, and October 30, 1942, twenty-one separate fund-raising campaigns were launched. It was soon apparent that volunteer campaign workers could not be recruited in sufficient numbers to conduct drives for the U.S.O., British Relief, Greek Relief, and for all of the other groups that were seeking funds. Nor could the giving public be expected to respond adequately to such a bewildering variety of appeals. Some kind of unity in fund-raising was clearly needed.

Through Community Chests and Councils, Inc., the sentiments of local groups relative to this problem were channeled to the President's War Relief Control Board. As a result, the National War Fund was organized for the specific purpose of budgeting and raising funds for these new war-relief agencies. The first campaign of the National War Fund, launched in October, 1943, raised about \$127,000,000 for the support of the U.S.O., which was the major beneficiary, and some sixteen foreign war-relief agencies. Thus, all of the major wartime agencies, except the American Red Cross, were financed in one united nation-wide campaign. Fund-raising efforts were further consolidated in most cities and in many smaller communities by combining the National War Fund campaign with the annual drive for the support of the local permanent charities. A second similar appeal was launched in October, 1944, with an objective of \$115,000,000 for the National War Fund and an estimated additional \$135,000,000 for local community chests.

At present it appears that joint financing of the war-relief agencies and of local charities will continue until peacetime conditions have been restored. This development, which local community chests desired, was greatly accelerated through the leadership that the national organization was able to provide.

The community organization activities of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., are necessarily, by the very nature of its structure, almost exclusively urban in character. Moreover, the national office appears, in general, to have developed closer relationships with the local community chests than with the local councils of social agencies in the limited number of cities where the two organizations are independent of one another. Hence its influence appears to have been greatest in those cities in which

there is an organic relationship between the local chest and the local council. Nevertheless, in the last two decades, urban social work has been very extensively affected by the work of this organization. In the rural field there has been no agency in a position to provide an equally comprehensive approach to problems of co-ordination and social planning.

NATIONAL AGENCIES IN FUNCTIONAL FIELDS  
AND NATIONAL COUNCILS

The *Social Work Year Book* for 1941 includes a directory of national agencies in the field of social work. The national private agencies included in this list number 395. A great many of these agencies, however, are related to the field of social work only in a collateral way. Others are very small organizations that function on an informal basis without paid service. It has been estimated that less than 50 of these national private agencies could be classified as "well-known, significant, and influential."<sup>7</sup> Among this group, a majority participate in the community organization process, often at both the national and the local levels. In general, most national private agencies are primarily concerned with one specialized field of service, such as family welfare, child welfare, recreation, etc. Hence their concern for the total development of local community services normally arises through their identification with a specific local program. In most instances the local units of the national agency provide some or all of the financial support for the national program.

Considerable variation exists in the structure of national agencies. In some instances a central national board defines the structure, powers, and functions of the local unit, sometimes with very little local participation. In other cases the national organization is formed by a combination of local units and functions under the direction of a national governing body that represents the constituent member-organizations. Many variant patterns might be mentioned, of course, though, in general, even in the most highly centralized national agencies there appears to be an increasing tendency to try to bring the local units into an advisory or a participating relationship.

National agencies are in a position to assist local groups in improving local services. The local units tend to look to their national headquarters for leadership and to expect them to be pace-setters in their particular field of work. In so far as they help local units to define their structure and function, the national agencies assist in the community organization proc-

<sup>7</sup> David H. Holbrook, "National Associations in Social Work," *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, p. 365.

ess; for often an outside point of view helps the local group to find its most effective place in the total pattern of local services. In some instances national agencies attempt to establish minimum standards for their local units. Standards make for better work, and local units, as a rule, tend to desire the sense of security that results from measuring up to a nationally accepted level of performance. Hence, by developing standards, national agencies often contribute to the improvement of local services. Likewise, national agencies may provide a channel through which widely scattered local agencies may achieve a formulation of common objectives. Here again it is reassuring to local groups to recognize that units in other communities have arrived at convictions similar to their own. The resulting feeling of solidarity may stimulate greater activity in behalf of the objectives agreed upon. In every community there are many unmet social needs. Local units often look to their national headquarters for guidance in developing new programs to meet such needs. They know that the national agency has information about developments in its specific field throughout the country. Many of them regard this fund of information as a resource they can draw upon in charting their own course locally.

The national agencies utilize a variety of mediums in extending their services to their local member-organizations. Many of them publish journals. Others circulate informal bulletins. Some undertake extensive pieces of research and disseminate the findings in formal or informal reports. Most of them hold annual conferences, and, in addition, some arrange regional meetings. A number maintain a traveling field staff to provide direct consultation service on local problems, not only with respect to specific matters of program and service, but also with respect to relationships with other groups in the community. Some of these traveling field representatives periodically prepare reports that are, in effect, an analysis of community needs, services, and sources of leadership. These reports then provide a basis for planning the development of the national agency's services to the community. Some of the national agencies limit their services to the communities in which they have member-organizations. Others explore the needs in unorganized communities and may undertake to establish branches in such places.

A majority of the national private agencies devote most of their effort to the urban communities of the country. This is partly because many of them represent specialized programs that have not, in general, been developed in rural areas. An important exception is the program of the American National Red Cross, which has chapters and branches in hundreds of rural communities, as well as in cities. The field service of the Red Cross

operates out of three regional offices<sup>8</sup> located in the East, the Midwest, and the Far West. These offices maintain a staff of field workers who pay regular visits to all chapters in the region, including those in small towns and rural counties. In most rural counties the field service of the Red Cross is the only outside contact with private social work that the community enjoys. This contact, which has been continuous since the days of World War I, has had an important influence in many rural districts in helping the people to become aware of the social problems in their own community and has thus undoubtedly helped to pave the way for the acceptance of the new public social services instituted in the decade of the 1930's.

The work of the national private agencies in local communities has, of course, not been uniformly successful. In some instances it has actually confused the efforts of local groups. Where this has occurred, it appears to have been due very often either to competitive promotional activity or to excessive preoccupation with one particular program. Each national agency naturally sees opportunities for increased activity on the part of its local unit. The effort to induce the local unit to expand its work may, however, conflict with the plans which some other national agency and its local branch are considering, or it may run counter to some plan of development that is wholly local in origin. In such instances the basic obstacle is program-mindedness—a familiar problem in social work. When local councils of social agencies were first organized, one of their basic objectives was to substitute community-mindedness for agency-mindedness and program-mindedness. The national agencies likewise were soon made sharply aware of the need for some kind of arrangement that would help them to see the community as a whole. Some of them also recognized that there should be some co-ordination of their activities both at the national level and in specific local communities. As a result, efforts were set afoot which resulted in the formation of several councils of national social agencies. The oldest of these—the National Health Council—was founded in 1921 and now includes 20 national agencies that are concerned with health work. The National Education-Recreation Council, established in 1933, includes 23 national voluntary organizations and 11 federal agencies. More recently, a council of national agencies concerned with social case work has been established.<sup>9</sup> All of these councils operate in specialized

<sup>8</sup> The number of regional offices increases in time of war because of the enlarged volume of work.

<sup>9</sup> This council, which is known as the Social Case Work Council of National Agencies, had 13 member-agencies in April, 1945, six of which were also members of one of the other national councils.



fields. The National Social Work Council, established in 1922, is more comprehensive in scope, with a membership which includes 31 national agencies and one council of national agencies. These agencies are not all operating in the same field, as in the case of the other councils. Some of the member-organizations are concerned with health, some with recreation, others with child welfare, etc. A number of the national agencies belong both to the National Social Work Council and to the councils in their own specialized fields.

The purpose of the National Social Work Council has been stated as follows: "To provide a means through which those responsible for nationally organized social work, either as volunteers or as professional social workers, may more readily exchange information; to provide for regular conference between leaders; and through committees of the Council to provide for the investigation and study of common problems."<sup>10</sup> Undoubtedly, the existence of a recognized channel for intercommunication has been of benefit to the national agencies. Certainly, there is evidence that the impact of national agencies upon local communities is now free from some of the objectionable features that characterized some of these relationships in an earlier period. One observer, writing in the early 1920's, was impelled to say: "The aggressive efforts of national agencies to extend their influence tend to multiply the number of agencies in communities sometimes without due regard to the total community situation. The available evidence seems to show that the laudable desire of national organizations to gain a large constituency has, in many instances, been the chief contributing factor in the overorganization of communities."<sup>11</sup> The change that occurred in the next two decades is reflected in the opinion expressed by another observer in 1941: "The day is past when most reputable national agencies will organize new local units without regard to the opinions of the local planning councils concerning local needs."<sup>12</sup> Although the National Social Work Council is not uniquely responsible for the improvement that has occurred, the habit of conferring and working together at the national level through this council has undoubtedly contributed to the result. Few, if any, of the national agencies would deny that there is room for still further improvement. Many of the problems that have engaged their attention in the national council have related to questions of a general character, such, for example, as financing, account-

<sup>10</sup> *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, p. 692.

<sup>11</sup> J. F. Steiner, *Community Organization* (1925 ed.), p. 311.

<sup>12</sup> C. F. McNeil, "Relationship between Community Organization and National Agencies from a Local Point of View," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*, 1938, p. 458.

ing, standards of service, etc. There appears to be a need for further efforts to co-ordinate the plans and objectives of the national agencies with respect to the specific local communities they are serving. The evidence suggests that local communities still occasionally find representatives of two or more national agencies suggesting local developments that cannot be reconciled with one another. Closer and more frequent clearance of plans among the national agencies would reduce this source of confusion.

#### THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The American Association of Social Workers is a nation-wide professional organization. Founded in 1921, this association now has approximately eleven thousand members. From the outset this organization has been concerned to limit its membership to persons possessing professional qualifications. In the beginning, the requirements for admission to membership necessarily had to be stated in rather general terms. The tendency has been, however, to make the requirements increasingly specific. Since 1933, applicants for membership have been required to submit evidence of having completed a prescribed minimum of professional education in social work.<sup>13</sup> This policy excludes at present a large number of people who hold social work positions. The experience in some of the older professions<sup>14</sup> suggests, however, that size of membership should not be the major consideration in a professional organization and that the raising of standards of professional competence is facilitated by adherence to a membership standard. The A.A.S.W. is thus unique among national organizations in the field of generic social work,<sup>15</sup> since it is the only one that scrutinizes the professional qualifications of the individuals who wish to affiliate with it. In this respect its policy is similar to that of professional organizations in the fields of law and medicine.

A majority of the members of the A.A.S.W. are affiliated with local chapters, of which there are 96 scattered throughout the country. In a number of states where two or more chapters are located, state councils have been organized. These councils facilitate a unified approach to state-wide professional problems. They also afford an opportunity for participation on the part of members who work in localities within the state where there is no organized local chapter.

<sup>13</sup> For an official statement of the membership requirements see *By-laws, American Association of Social Workers, Inc.*, Art. IV (July 1, 1941).

<sup>14</sup> See Alfred Z. Reed, *Training for the Public Profession of the Law* (1921), p. 204.

<sup>15</sup> For a brief description of professional organizations in specialized fields of social work, such as the American Association of Medical Social Workers and the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers, see *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 340-41, 415, 641.

The purposes of the A.A.S.W., as stated in the bylaws, are as follows: "This corporation is an association of social workers meeting qualifications of training and experience, working in the area of human relationships, interested in advancing the quality of social service by means of individual and collective action in defining, promoting and protecting social work concepts and principles in the following areas: social work practice and the advancing body of knowledge and skills required in practice; personnel standards, including professional education; standards of organization and administration affecting practice; and social problems observed in social work practice."<sup>16</sup> Within this general framework a considerable range of specific activities is carried on both by the national office and by the local chapters.

A considerable part of the work of the national organization moves forward under the guidance of national committees, assisted by members of the employed staff. Each committee is given an assignment in a specific area. In recent years, for example, the assignments of national committees have related to such questions as employment practices, personnel standards, membership standards, and the responsibilities of government in the field of social work. The general procedure of the committees is to assemble data from local chapters and cognate sources and to formulate, on the basis of this evidence, tentative statements of principles, objectives, and recommendations, in order that concrete proposals may be placed before the membership for consideration. After this material has been examined by the governing body of the association, it is then usually circulated among the members and the chapters for study. The membership may then adopt, reject, or modify the proposals. Usually final action is taken at the annual delegate conference of the association after the chapters have had an opportunity to discuss the material. Proposals adopted in this way are regarded as official statements of the association's position and purposes, and serve as a guide to members and chapters.

The A.A.S.W. has expended considerable effort in an attempt to improve the employment practices of social agencies. After extensive study and discussion, a statement was formulated and adopted that sets forth the standards recommended. This statement has served a useful purpose. It is clear that until employment practices are greatly improved, it will be difficult to persuade competent people to enter the field of social work in sufficient numbers to do the work that needs to be done. Hence the improvement of employment practices is a basic professional obligation. The A.A.S.W., in helping communities to recognize the causal relationship be-

<sup>16</sup> *By-Laws, American Association of Social Workers, Inc.*, Art. II, Sec. 1 (July 1, 1941).

tween employment practices and standards of service and in stimulating them to find ways to make advances in this area, has therefore given impetus to a movement that should ultimately have far-reaching effects.

The activities and obligations of government in the field of social work have also received continuing attention from the A.A.S.W. During the critical decade of the 1930's, several surveys of the relief situation were made. The findings, which were widely publicized, helped to clarify public opinion. This was an important service, since the country was at that time resounding with confused and confusing statements, many of which were based on unreliable data or even upon wilful misrepresentations. In addition, the association exercised leadership in marshaling the testimony of its members for the consideration of congressional committees that were attempting to formulate national relief policies. This testimony was effective because it emanated from people who were thoroughly conversant with the existing situation. In this connection, the interpretation placed upon this experience by the president of the association<sup>17</sup> is significant because it emphasizes the special character of the contribution a professional organization in the field of social work can make: "In the Congressional hearings it wasn't our strength as a pressure group which gave any significance to what was done by social workers in Washington. We have no strength as a pressure group. It wasn't the eloquence of those who appeared at Congressional hearings or on other occasions; it wasn't even the personal prestige of any of us. It was rather the extent to which we possessed and gave circulation to facts which we as professional social workers had to a greater degree than did other people. It was also the extent to which our experience made us competent to speak upon the administrative features of the program we were advocating which gave force to what we had to say. . . ."

In addition to the work undertaken at the national level, a considerable range of activities is carried on by the local chapters and state councils within the general framework of the association's purposes as quoted above. The emphasis in the local work has been determined to a considerable extent by the nature of local and state problems and by the interests of the local members. The resources of local chapters also influence the scope and character of the local program. A few of the largest chapters employ full-time or part-time secretaries and maintain a central office. A majority, however, carry on their work through the volunteer efforts of their officers and members. These differences are due, in part, to the un-

<sup>17</sup> "From the Address of Linton B. Swift Opening the Delegate Conference," *Compass*, XVIII, No. 6 (March, 1937), 2.

equal distribution of the membership throughout the country. In 1941, slightly more than half of the total membership of the association<sup>18</sup> was located in the six states of New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, California, Ohio, and Missouri. Fifteen states had fewer than fifty members apiece. The record indicates, however, that some of the small chapters have succeeded in conducting local programs that contribute substantially to the advancement of the association's purposes. One small chapter, for example, has exercised leadership in arousing the local community's concern about conditions in the field of housing. Several co-operated effectively with local groups of citizens and with public officials during the periodic relief crises that arose during the 1930's. The larger chapters tend to organize committees that operate in approximately the same areas as the national committees. The Chicago chapter, for example, for a number of years has maintained active committees on membership, employment practices, and government and social work in an effort to co-operate with the corresponding national committees and to enhance the benefits accruing to the local community from the work of the national committees. In addition, the large chapters and state councils often institute special projects that are inspired by immediate local needs. Thus, in 1937, the Ohio council of the A.A.S.W. employed an attorney to serve as *amicus curiae* in an important case involving civil service standards. In the same year the Los Angeles chapter undertook to enlist the aid of some two hundred organizations in urging the state legislature to provide funds in the budget of the state university to expand the program of professional education for social work. A considerable number of the chapters, both large and small, have succeeded in arousing local communities to an awareness of the importance of improved employment practices.

In recent years, at the delegate conference and at other A.A.S.W. gatherings, speakers have made frequent reference to "our area of competence." The implication of this expression is that, as a professional group, the A.A.S.W. is a unique type of resource in community life, both locally and nationally. The evidence clearly suggests that in other fields, such as law, for example, the professional organization has frequently been able to place its specialized knowledge and experience at the disposal of the community. The A.A.S.W. aspires to render a comparable service in a field that seems destined to loom increasingly large, not only locally and nationally, but also internationally. The extent to which the association helps communities to recognize the availability of this resource will de-

<sup>18</sup> Esther Lucile Brown, *Social Work as a Profession* (1942 ed.), p. 124.

termine the measure of its opportunity to participate in the processes of community organization.

#### THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION

The membership of the American Public Welfare Association includes approximately twenty-four hundred individuals and 110 organizations. The great majority of the members are actively identified with the administration of the public social services, either at the local, the state, or the federal level. Two councils function within the framework of the A.P.W.A.: (1) the National Council of State Public Assistance and Welfare Administrators and (2) the National Council of Local Public Welfare Administrators. The first of these councils is limited to members of the A.P.W.A. who are administrators of welfare or assistance programs at the state level. Through its committees, this council has been able to give concerted attention to trouble spots that have hampered the efforts of the state welfare administrations. Similarly, the council of local administrators admits to membership only those members of the A.P.W.A. who are, in fact, directing local public welfare programs. Both councils provide forums for those who face similar problems in comparable governmental units. Both provide mediums for the dissemination of information. Neither takes official action except through the executive committee of the parent-organization.

The A.P.W.A. serves as an important resource in community organization activities. One of its functions is to conduct surveys of public welfare programs and to make recommendations for improvements. Typical undertakings in this area were the studies of public welfare administration in Illinois and Minnesota; of local welfare administration in Louisville, Kentucky, in Grundy County, Tennessee, and in Dallas, San Antonio, and Waco, Texas; and of the provisions for the care of homeless men in Chicago.

A consultation service is also provided. This service is extended to all levels of government and to elected public officials as well as to welfare administrators. Much of this work is carried on through the field visits of the employed staff. Federal officials, governors of states, mayors, and legislators are among those who have made extensive use of the association's consultation service. As the defense emergency of 1940-41 deepened into war, the A.P.W.A. was called upon to assist at the federal level in outlining the morale activities to be carried on under the auspices of the

Army and the Navy, in planning the social service developments in communities adjacent to military and naval establishments and in defense boom towns, and in working out problems of division of responsibility between public welfare departments and private agencies with local war-service programs, such as the Red Cross and the United Service Organizations. Assistance of similar character was also extended upon request to states and to local communities.

In some instances the association lends its personnel to governmental bodies that seek help in installing or stabilizing or improving a program. Mississippi and Texas requested and were provided with this type of service in the early 1930's when they faced the problem of organizing a state-wide agency to supervise unemployment relief activities. In each instance a member of the staff of the A.P.W.A. was assigned to the executive branch of the state government and remained at the state capital until the new service was fairly launched.

The association also serves as a clearing house for interchange of experience in dealing with problems of public welfare. This service is carried out through correspondence, field visits, conferences, and publications. In addition to two regular monthly publications, the association issues periodic circulars and bulletins and reports on special studies. Some of these materials relate to the community organization activities of welfare departments.

From the outset the association recognized that improvement in the qualifications and standards of personnel was the key to the solution of some of the basic problems in the field. Without good personnel, the administration of the expanded public social services would perhaps be such as to defeat the purposes of the new legislation, and communities would be certain to receive less help than they had a right to expect in their efforts to integrate the new programs into the existing pattern of social provisions. Hence continuous effort has been made to promote better recruitment and better training of public welfare personnel. Assistance in recruitment has been given to all levels of government by interviewing applicants, by answering calls for advice on personnel practices and procedures, and by conducting special studies. In addition, officials administering the merit systems have frequently called upon the staff to serve on oral examining boards. Training has also been stimulated. State and local communities have been urged to institute in-service training programs. The association has aided them in this task by advising with respect to the initial problems of organization and by helping to mobilize both the material and the teachers for the courses. Frequently members of the staff

have participated directly by offering short courses or institutes and by giving special lectures.

The Social Security Act of 1935 is, by any standard, a landmark in the social history of the United States. To the A.P.W.A. the new legislation presented a special challenge. If the objectives of the act were to be realized, an enormous task lay ahead: extensive and complicated legislation would be needed in every state; new departments and bureaus would have to be created; procedures and standards would have to be developed; and, above all, personnel would have to be found for hundreds of new jobs and, in many instances, would have to be given some basic training to prepare them for their tasks. Confronted by these varied and baffling problems, scores of legislators, elected officials, welfare administrators, and interested citizen groups turned to the A.P.W.A. for advice. Thus, force of circumstance provided the association with an extraordinary opportunity to guide the community organization process. As a result, for several years following 1935, consultation with respect to the security programs was the major activity of the association. In extending this service throughout the country the association was able to help many state and local groups in interpreting public welfare activities to their constituencies and in pointing out the needs which the new programs left untouched.

To a considerable extent the planning activities of the A.P.W.A. are carried on through committees. For example, in 1942, committees were working on the following subjects: information clearance; personnel; public aid policies; war services; medical care; and public welfare accounting. As a rule, these committees submit reports outlining their findings and their recommendations, and these reports are then made available for consideration by the entire membership.<sup>19</sup>

The offices of the A.P.W.A. are in a building that houses sixteen national organizations, all of which are concerned with one or another aspect of government and public administration. This arrangement has proved to be mutually helpful. For example, the Council of State Governments is the secretariat for the Governors' Conference, the National Association of Attorneys General, and the National Association of Secretaries of State; and it serves as a clearing house and research center for legislators and legislative reference bureaus. Obviously, this council frequently receives requests for assistance with problems of public welfare. Its proximity to the A.P.W.A. insures clearance of plans and opens the way to important

<sup>19</sup> For typical reports see "Report of A.P.W.A. Committee on Relief Policies," *Public Welfare News*, X, No. 2 (February, 1942), 6-9; and "Report of Committee on Food Stamp Plans," *ibid.*, No. 10 (October, 1942), pp. 6-9.



contacts for both organizations and to joint action in behalf of common objectives.

The A.P.W.A. was founded at a very opportune moment or, perhaps more accurately, was the product of the demand of the times. The period following its establishment was one in which communities were struggling to adjust to new opportunities and responsibilities ushered in by the great expansion of the public social services during the 1930's. It was, in short, a period in which there was a widespread demand for expert guidance in the public welfare field. Hence the A.P.W.A. quickly assumed a position of leadership which enabled it to assist not only the major units of government but also local communities, large and small, urban and rural, in discovering new and better ways of meeting old problems.

#### THE UNITED STATES CHILDREN'S BUREAU

For many years the United States Children's Bureau, established by Congress in 1912, was the only agency in the federal government concerned with the improvement of the nation's social services. From the outset its responsibility for promoting the welfare of children inevitably led it into community organization; for it was clear that an equal chance for all children meant the development of concern among local groups to provide the safeguards and the numerous types of services essential for the conservation of family life.

The establishment of the bureau will always be regarded as a turning-point in the history of public welfare development in the United States. It was an event that marked the beginning of the end of the long and paralyzing tradition that the federal government must remain aloof from the field of public welfare. Devotion to this tradition has, nevertheless, decreased slowly and even today is by no means completely extinct. Periodically, over the years, the appropriations for the bureau's work—always very small in comparison with the expenditures of other governmental agencies—have been threatened, often because of this persistent conviction that welfare problems should remain the exclusive concern of state and local governments. In the beginning, Congress evidently intended that the bureau should engage primarily in research, consultation, and promotion. Periodically, however, deviations from this pattern were authorized, and the bureau was charged with important administrative or supervisory functions, as, for example, in the first federal child labor law of 1916 and in the Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921 for promotion of the welfare and hygiene of maternity and infancy. The decade of the 1930's witnessed the acceptance of a new point of view with respect to federal responsibility in

the field of social welfare. This departure resulted not only in the establishment of new federal welfare agencies but also in the adding of presumably permanent administrative and supervisory functions to the established activities of the Children's Bureau.

The research activities of the bureau have for many years provided a solid foundation for social planning. These activities have covered a very wide range of undertakings. In addition to its numerous studies of specific problems, the bureau has promoted reporting systems to provide a continuing flow of data relating to child welfare needs and services. Typical of the latter are the statistics of employment certificates issued to children,<sup>20</sup> the juvenile court statistics,<sup>21</sup> and the statistics on health and welfare services in urban areas.<sup>22</sup> The special studies relate to health and welfare needs as they affect children and mothers, problems of administration of child welfare programs, maternal care, child health, medical treatment for crippled children, etc. Often these studies are made in specific localities or states, at the request of the state or local authority, frequently in co-operation with medical schools, institutions of higher education, state health and welfare authorities, and similar public service agencies. The following list of studies<sup>23</sup> completed or in progress in 1941 suggests the scope of this aspect of the bureau's work: studies of premature infants (in co-operation with New York Hospital and the Department of Pediatrics of Cornell University Medical School); feeding of premature infants born in the New Haven Hospital; rickets studies (in co-operation with Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore); maternal and child-health facilities in Chattanooga (at the request of the Tennessee commissioner of public health, in co-operation with the U.S. Public Health Service); home delivery services conducted by fifteen medical schools in eleven states; health status of children of agricultural laborers in Hidalgo County, Texas (in co-operation with the U.S. Office of Education); public services for children in St. Louis, Missouri (at the request of the mayor and two local public agencies serving children); community resources for mentally

<sup>20</sup> This series, begun in 1921, included figures, by the end of June, 1941, from 46 states, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the 31 cities of more than 50,000 population in the two remaining states (*Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1941*, p. 105).

<sup>21</sup> In 1940, reports were received from 514 courts located in areas that included 38 per cent of the population of the United States (*ibid.*, p. 104).

<sup>22</sup> In 1940, reports were received from 3,713 agencies in 22 fields of service. The 45 participating urban areas represented 56 per cent of the total population in cities of 100,000 or more population in the United States (*ibid.*).

<sup>23</sup> This list is illustrative and therefore does not include all the studies which engaged the attention of the bureau; for a complete inventory of these activities see *ibid.*, pp. 96-106.

retarded children; studies of the Alabama state training schools for boys and girls (at the request of the governor of Alabama and the board of directors of the boys' school); study of the juvenile work of the Municipal Court of Portland, Maine (at the request of the judge); employment of out-of-school minors in Elizabeth, New Jersey, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Richmond, Virginia; study of child labor in Alaska; studies of maternal and neonatal deaths. A majority of the bureau's research projects result in the publication of reports. These reports are widely used throughout the country by groups that are concerned to obtain guidance in their efforts to improve the provisions for children in their own communities.

Through correspondence and particularly through its field staff, the bureau provides a consultation service to state and local officials, public and private social agencies, and citizen groups concerned with problems of child welfare. For example, in 1941, consultation service on the care of premature infants was given in Louisiana and Michigan and on maternal mortality in Alabama at the request of the state departments of health. State or territorial departments of welfare and legislative committees in eighteen states, Alaska, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico requested and received advice relative to various aspects of child welfare legislation, such as adoption, establishment of paternity, state and local services for children, and juvenile jurisdiction in the courts. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia sought assistance in outlining standards or preparing suggestive drafts for state legislation relating to child labor.<sup>24</sup> Thus to local communities and to states the consultation service is a resource which they can utilize in the community organization process, while, from the standpoint of the bureau, these contacts provide a valuable means of disseminating the material that results from its research program.

The bureau has also used the demonstration method in promoting improved standards of child care. In 1937, for example, it launched a project in St. Paul, Minnesota, the purpose of which was "to develop experience in the organization and co-ordination of community services for children that would be applicable in any urban area."<sup>25</sup> In this demonstration the bureau employed a staff to render specific services in the community. The personnel of the St. Paul project included<sup>26</sup> a psychiatrist, a psychologist, an assistant psychologist, a group worker, a junior assistant in group work, and two case workers. This staff gave direct service to an average of 116 cases per month during 1940. The program focused upon prevention

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98, 99, 101-2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>26</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor*, . . . 1940, p. 136.

and treatment of problems of delinquency and maladjustment among children. In this, as in most demonstrations, the bureau plans to withdraw from further direct participation, though the hope is, of course, that the successful elements in the program<sup>27</sup> will be retained and incorporated in the work of permanent local agencies. In its demonstrations the bureau seeks to effect a closer co-ordination of the child welfare services already functioning in the community. However, this direct participation in local community organization activities is, of course, regarded as secondary in importance. The major purpose is to provide a well-documented record of an experiment that may prove to be suggestive and helpful to groups in other communities.

In her *Annual Report* for the fiscal year 1938, the chief of the Children's Bureau pointed out that, by reason of provisions in the Social Security Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act, "the responsibilities of the Children's Bureau have been extended beyond research, consultation service, and dissemination of information, to include the development, with the State Agencies of health, welfare, and labor, of joint undertakings for the advancement of the well-being of children and youth." These new responsibilities have greatly enlarged the participation of the bureau in the community organization process.<sup>28</sup> The development of child welfare services, for example, is stimulated through the device of federal grants-in-aid to the states. In order to obtain the grants, the states must submit their plans to the bureau for approval. The bureau, in turn, provides regional child welfare consultants to assist the states in formulating and developing their programs. As a result of these co-operative relationships, 773 professional workers, paid in whole or in part from federal funds, were engaged in providing child welfare services in 1941 in the states and territories. More than 500 of these workers gave direct services in local communities, and 255 were engaged in state services, "including assistance in organizing community child-welfare activities, consultation services to local workers, and specialized types of services related to the development of adequate care and protection for children."<sup>29</sup> Great emphasis has been placed upon state and local participation. The workers stationed in the counties have been encouraged to assist local groups in achieving better co-ordination of existing services and to help them to find improved

<sup>27</sup> For a description of this project see *ibid.*, pp. 136-37.

<sup>28</sup> The current emergency has likewise caused an expansion of the bureau's activities in this area, though these war-induced undertakings are, of course, presumably temporary—especially those assumed in co-operation with the Office of Civilian Defense and the Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services.

<sup>29</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor*, . . . 1941, p. 121.

means of expressing their concern for the protection and development of child life.<sup>30</sup> Although limitations in funds have made it possible to extend this program to a relatively small proportion of the communities in the country,<sup>31</sup> the going projects have served two important purposes, in addition, of course, to what they have directly contributed to the welfare of specific children: (1) they have provided a nation-wide series of demonstrations of child welfare programs under widely varying conditions; (2) they have developed an increased awareness of the opportunities for leadership in the community organization process that local public agencies may exercise.

The bureau makes frequent use of advisory committees in formulating plans and standards; for example, an advisory committee on the Registration of Social Statistics project has been in continuous existence since 1930. Advisory committees also function in conjunction with each of the three social security programs administered by the bureau (Maternal and Child Health Services; Services for Crippled Children; Community Child Welfare Services). Although the major purpose of these committees is to consult with the bureau respecting specific problems, the members are also, of course, channels through which child welfare needs, services, and standards are interpreted to the general public.

The promotional activities of the bureau merit special comment. Wide use has been made of the familiar mediums of interpretation, such as radio broadcasts, educational moving pictures, speeches, exhibits, and publications. Some of the publications, such as those relating to prenatal care and to infant care, have been in wide demand and have been distributed throughout the country to the number of ten million copies. The bureau has also arranged numerous conferences that have attracted nation-wide attention to the problems of children. The so-called "White House Conferences," convoked about once in ten years by the president of the United States, have been conspicuously successful in this respect. The most recent of these gatherings, known as the "White House Conference on Children in a Democracy," convened in 1940. The Children's Bureau served in an executive capacity in relation to this conference and is re-

<sup>30</sup> The writer was privileged to read an interesting community case record prepared by Miss Abbie Hawk, who was assigned, under this program, to a county in northwestern Ohio. The record clearly revealed the emphasis placed upon assisting in the solution of problems of community organization. See also "What Child-Welfare Services Have Meant from the Point of View of County Development" by Winifred Lockard, county children's worker, Burnett County, Wisconsin, in *Proceedings of the Conference on State Child-Welfare Services* (Maternal and Child-Welfare Bull. 3, U.S. Children's Bureau), Pp. 17-22.

<sup>31</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor*, . . . 1941, p. 121. Workers were assigned in 1941 to 511 counties, 70 towns, 48 municipalities (Puerto Rico), and 3 cities.

sponsible for its follow-up program. The conference adopted a report that sets forth the essentials of a program for child care and protection. It agreed upon the necessity of a long-range approach in seeking the attainment of these objectives. Follow-up activities have since been initiated in more than half of the states<sup>32</sup> and the recommendations of the conference have been given nation-wide publicity both in general and in professional publications and through co-operation with various national and local organizations. Committees have been organized in 26 states, often with the assistance of the governor, that are responsible for continuing to direct public attention to existing deficiencies in the provisions for children and to the goals envisaged by the White House conference.

In its emphasis upon the needs of children and the relationship of these needs to the future well-being of the community and the nation, this conference, under the leadership of the Children's Bureau, attained an unusually high level of interpretative and promotional achievement. Doubtless there will be great variations in the responses to this challenge. Some communities will attempt to discharge their obligations in one way, and others will adopt a very different approach. The publicity has not sought to promote any one agency or any one solution. The effort has been rather to develop an awareness of need and to implant a desire to meet the need. The disinterested character of the publicity undoubtedly goes far to explain the quality of co-operation it has evoked. Certainly, comparatively few interpretative efforts in recent years have succeeded in attracting wider attention or in enlisting a more sustained response.

The history of the Children's Bureau throws interesting light on the debated question of the extent to which public agencies can engage in promotional activity. The annual reports of this agency regularly include specific recommendations, some of which involve the bureau in issues that are distinctly controversial. For example, in 1938, one of the recommendations was "Completion of ratification of the child labor amendment." Several recent reports have urged amendment of Title V, Part 3 (Child Welfare Services) of the Social Security Act to improve present services and to extend them to larger numbers of children. In addition, the chief of the bureau has frequently given testimony before congressional committees in support of, or in opposition to, a pending bill.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the executive heads of the bureau have frequently participated actively in

<sup>32</sup> Emma O. Lundberg, "Wartime Emergencies and Long-Range Child-Welfare Programs," *Child*, VII, No. 7 (January, 1943), 94-96.

<sup>33</sup> For illustrations see: Testimony of Grace Abbott, *Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Manufactures, U.S. Senate, 74th Congress, Second Session, on S. 5121 (Relief*

promotional efforts in behalf of various proposed pieces of social legislation by giving public addresses, by writing articles, and by serving on committees interested in advancing the projected measures. It should be noted, however, that these activities have been completely dissociated from political campaigns. They have invariably related rather to issues—presumably nonpartisan in character—concerning which the bureau has substantial bodies of evidence. Participation, even at this objective level, has frequently evoked criticism from congressmen and others who opposed the stand taken by the bureau. Nevertheless, it now seems clear that opinion both in the legislative and in the executive branches of government tends to support the view that the advocacy of improved provisions falls within the sphere of the bureau's obligations and is a legitimate and appropriate aspect of its activity.<sup>34</sup>

Recent decades have witnessed the growth of a conviction that the community organization process must be extended as rapidly as possible to a global level. Thus far this desire has not met with conspicuous success in the political sphere. Encouraging progress has been made in some areas, however, particularly in the fields of labor and of social welfare. In this development the U.S. Children's Bureau has played an important role. The chief of the bureau and various members of the staff have repeatedly represented this country in international undertakings. For example, from 1922 to 1934 the chief of the bureau was the official representative of the United States on the League of Nations' advisory committees on traffic in women and on child welfare. She also served as delegate to successive conferences concerned with the development of labor standards, organized under the auspices of the International Labour Office. More recently the bureau helped in the establishment of the United States Committee for the Care of European Children, Inc.—an organization designed to provide refuge in this country for children from European war zones. Pan-American activities have also received continuing attention. The bureau has exercised leadership in the organization of a series of Pan-American child congresses, the eighth of which, scheduled to be held in Costa Rica in 1939, had to be postponed because of war conditions.<sup>35</sup>

for *Unemployed Transients*), pp. 23-35; and testimony of Katharine Lenroot, *Hearings on the May Bill (To Prohibit Prostitution within Reasonable Distance of Military and Naval Establishments)*, Committee on Military Affairs, H.R. 2475 (77th Cong., 1st sess.), pp. 11-15.

<sup>34</sup> The Social Security Board is a relatively new federal welfare agency. Its course to date, with respect to the promotion of social welfare measures, has been not unlike that of the Children's Bureau, as described above.

<sup>35</sup> This congress was finally held in Washington, May 2-9, 1942, with 61 official delegates representing 21 American republics in attendance. The chief of the Children's Bureau served

The bureau has also sent members of its staff upon request to other countries in the Western Hemisphere to give advisory and consultation service. As these and similar international efforts have expanded, it has become increasingly clear that, at the national level, no less than at the local level, there is need for a recognized center through which public welfare needs, services, and standards may be interpreted to other jurisdictions. Since its organization in 1912, the Children's Bureau has been the agency which has been intrusted with this function in the efforts the United States has made to co-operate with other countries in seeking solutions of problems of social welfare.

#### THE SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD

The Social Security Board is the largest federal agency concerned with the administration and supervision of public social service programs. At the close of the fiscal year 1941 its staff numbered 12,682 persons. During the same year its administrative expenses amounted to \$26,503,543, and it made grants to the states totaling \$393,338,000.<sup>36</sup>

The board was established in 1935 following the approval of the Social Security Act.<sup>37</sup> Charged with a wide range of activities, the board functions through three operating bureaus and three service bureaus. The three operating bureaus are (1) the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance, (2) the Bureau of Employment Security, and (3) the Bureau of Public Assistance. The Bureau of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance maintains wage records for all employees covered by the old age and survivors' provisions of the Social Security Act, examines claims and certifies approved claims to the Treasury Department for payment, keeps track of the status and address of beneficiaries, and assumes general responsibility for carrying out the intent of Congress with respect to the groups protected under Title II of the act. The Bureau of Employment Security assists state agencies in developing unemployment insurance services, recommends to the board the amount and character of the grants to states for administration of their unemployment compensation programs, checks state unemployment compensation laws to determine whether they conform with federal requirements, and exercises general supervision over the

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as chairman of the organizing committee and president of the Congress (*Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor*, . . . 1942, p. 31).

<sup>36</sup> *Sixth Annual Report of the Social Security Board*, 1941, pp. 164-65.

<sup>37</sup> Under the terms of Reorganization Plan No. 1, the Social Security Board was placed within the Federal Security Agency, effective July 1, 1939.



federal program of employment security.<sup>38</sup> The Bureau of Public Assistance is responsible for overseeing the three assistance programs: (1) Aid to the Blind; (2) Aid to Dependent Children; (3) Old Age Assistance. These obligations involve the examination of state laws and state administrative plans to ascertain whether they meet federal requirements, the making of recommendations to the board concerning grants to the states, and the extension of an advisory service both to the states and to the board with respect to problems of public assistance.

The three service bureaus of the board are (1) the Bureau of Accounts and Audits; (2) the Bureau of Research and Statistics; (3) the Informational Service. As their names indicate, these bureaus provide specialized technical services to assist the board, its operating bureaus, and the states in carrying out the purposes of the Social Security Act. It should be noted that the work of the Bureau of Research and Statistics concentrates upon problems outside the field of the operating bureaus, such as the extent and character of risks in the field of health, sickness, and disability. The operating bureaus assume responsibility for collection of statistics and the conduct of studies in their own areas. The Informational Service, in addition to conducting a nation-wide program to promote understanding of the Social Security Act, advises and assists the states in their efforts to supplement the federal activities in the field of publicity.

The organizational structure created by the board also provides for considerable decentralization of its services. Twelve regional offices have been established, each headed by a regional director and provided with a field staff. In addition, there are territorial offices in Alaska and Hawaii. Moreover, the regional organizations are supplemented by local offices that bring the services closer to the persons served. As of June 30, 1941, there were 477 field offices scattered throughout the regions, 13 branch offices, and 1,974 stations that received itinerant service from the board's employees.<sup>39</sup>

The responsibilities of the regional offices have been considerably enlarged because of the war emergency. In July, 1941, the regional representatives of the Bureau of Employment Security were named as chairmen of twelve regional labor supply committees established by the Labor Supply Branch of the Labor Division of the Office of Production Management. These committees were assigned the task of recruiting, training,

<sup>38</sup> Prior to December 1, 1942, the Bureau of Employment Security was also responsible for the development of the United States Employment Services. This function was transferred to the War Manpower Commission, by Executive Order No. 9247, dated September 17, 1942.

<sup>39</sup> *Sixth Annual Report . . .*, 1941, pp. 15, 160-63.

and placing workers needed in the war production effort. The directors of the regional offices were asked to assume responsibility for the co-ordination of defense health and welfare services within their areas. This assignment involved a great increase in the contacts of the regional officers with public and private agencies. Moreover, the preoccupation of the regional staff with problems of community organization was necessarily intensified. In fact, the regional offices took on obligations for groups of states not unlike the responsibilities of councils of social agencies in local communities. Whether this development will continue after the emergency has passed is difficult to foresee. Certainly, it is a possibility that the experiences gained through a regional approach to the co-ordination and planning of social welfare activities may suggest new ways of attacking interstate and regional problems that have hitherto proved to be very baffling.

The functions intrusted to the Social Security Board confer upon it an exceptional opportunity to accelerate the processes of community organization. The desire for protection against the hazards of life is practically universal; therefore, since the board is charged with affording protection against some of these hazards, its work automatically attracts the interest and attention of very large segments of the population. This gives the board a very large audience that can be counted upon to pay some heed to its informational and educational activities.<sup>40</sup> Undoubtedly this is one reason why the public information program of the board has met with such conspicuous success. Certainly, it is true that this effort has given millions of persons a broad general knowledge of the programs and methods of operation of the board.

The grant-in-aid system is also a very powerful asset. For a good many years some of the state welfare agencies have turned to federal agencies, such as the U.S. Children's Bureau, for advice and guidance. The grant-in-aid system automatically increases the number of state agencies seeking to establish and cultivate federal contacts. Moreover, these contacts are necessarily more continuous than the earlier advisory relationships, since both the state and the federal agencies have administrative responsibilities under a grant-in-aid system that can be properly discharged only on the basis of frequent consultation and clearance. As a result,

<sup>40</sup> The numbers of persons directly affected by the work of the board are indicated by the following figures taken from the *Sixth Annual Report . . . , 1941*: (a) cumulative established accounts as of June 27, 1941, in Old Age and Survivors' Insurance, 55,922,710; (b) employment service, active file, end of period 1940-41, 5,126,192; (c) estimated number of workers with credits toward unemployment benefits, end of period 1940-41, 35,000,000; (d) recipients of Old Age Assistance, June, 1941, 2,169,942; (e) children benefited by Aid to Dependent Children program, June, 1941, 916,742; (f) recipients of Aid to the Blind, June, 1941, 49,817 (*ibid.*, pp. 7, 173, 181, 198).

every state is now in constant contact with the Social Security Board in relation to the administration both of unemployment compensation and of one or more of the public assistance programs. The board is required, of course, to insist upon certain provisions and standards in the plans submitted by states desiring grants-in-aid. Beyond this point, however, the productivity of the federal-state relationships depends upon their quality. In an effort to serve as a useful resource, the board has established numerous technical services that are available to the states upon request. The board's Bureau of Public Assistance, for example, reported in 1940 that "services to state agencies have included consultation on general problems of social-welfare administration and technical advice on such topics as legislation, research and statistical reporting, public information, personnel standards, and constructive accounting and other aspects of finance."<sup>41</sup> This advice is extended, not only through the regular regional and field staffs, but also through technical consultants who visit the state agencies at the request of the state.

One of the most interesting of the services extended by the Bureau of Public Assistance is known as the "administrative review." These reviews are made in the local jurisdictions by agents working under the regional representative of the Bureau of Public Assistance. Nationally, this work is directed by the Administrative Review Section of the Bureau of Public Assistance. Historically, this service arose because of the bureau's obligation to make fiscal audits. During the course of these fiscal analyses, questions of administrative and social policy frequently arose which the auditors were not qualified to answer. As a result, the bureau decided to undertake social audits in addition to the fiscal audits. In carrying out the social audit, the agents of the bureau usually spend several consecutive days in the county (or other local administrative unit) attempting to evaluate policies, methods, standards, and quality of performance in the administration of the federally aided public assistance programs. Usually this involves the reading of case records as well as consultation with local staff and local officials. Those who make the social audit have no authority to direct the local agency to modify its existing methods of operation. At the conclusion of the audit, the agent renders a report to the regional office, summarizing his findings. This report then provides the regional office with a basis for initiating discussions with the state supervisory agency relative to improvements that appear to be needed. In the judgment of qualified observers, the social audit has proved to be one of the most successful of the bureau's services. A social audit by

<sup>41</sup> *Fifth Annual Report of the Social Security Board, 1940, p. 97.*

qualified social workers from the regional office strengthens the hand of the state agency in its dealings with the local jurisdictions. The recommendations, based on the study of specific local offices, also help the state agency to identify defects in its regulations and in its supervisory procedures. Ultimately, the effects are noted in the local communities in terms of improved practices with respect to such important matters as budgetary standards, eligibility requirements, etc.

The board has helped to promote public understanding of problems of social security through the appointment and use of advisory groups. In 1937, for example, an Advisory Council on Social Security was created which included representatives of employees, employers, and the general public. This council has given careful attention to its assignment and has made numerous suggestions for the improvement of existing provisions. In December, 1938, it published a report with recommendations that undoubtedly influenced the changes in the Social Security Act which Congress adopted in 1939. A major by-product of the council's activity has been the interpretation which its members have been equipped to provide in the regions where they live and among the groups with which they are associated. In addition, the board has maintained a close relationship with nongovernmental agencies whose activities are in some way concerned with the social security program. The board's *Annual Report* for 1940 mentions 17 such organizations with which it has collaborated.<sup>42</sup> This collaboration included analysis and planning and the undertaking of studies of such subjects as causes of blindness, public medical services, administration of general relief, partial unemployment and clearance arrangements between unemployment compensation and relief agencies, and investigation of labor-market conditions. These joint activities likewise contribute to an improved base of public understanding both of the existing provisions and of the unmet needs in the social security field.

When several national agencies, either public or private, are concerned with one or another aspect of welfare, there is always danger of overlapping or lack of co-ordination. It appears that federal agencies are now well aware of this hazard and have sought to avoid it. In its *First Annual Report* the Social Security Board said: "Among the less obvious, but deeply significant, achievements of the first year is the growing appreciation of the need for more adequate community services and facilities. . . . There is need for the extension of such facilities and the development of others on a much wider basis than at present. The board works closely with the Public Health Service, the Children's Bureau, the Vocational Rehabilita-

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

tion Service, and with private organizations in an attempt to foster the development of community facilities."<sup>43</sup>

A conspicuous illustration of this co-operative approach has been provided by the organization of the regional committees<sup>44</sup> to plan the development of health and welfare services during the war emergency. With the regional directors of the board as chairmen, these committees have included regional representatives of all other federal agencies concerned with health and welfare problems within the area. In other words, a medium now has been provided through which the various programs may be correlated at the state and local levels. Even more important, perhaps, is the opportunity thus afforded for joint planning and for co-ordinated efforts to adapt federal programs to the needs of regions, states, and communities.

Although the necessity of a factual basis for social planning has long been widely recognized, the data available have usually fallen far short of what the planners have needed and desired. The Social Security Board has filled many of these gaps. Its research activities<sup>45</sup> fall into three major categories: (1) collection and presentation of data accumulated as a by-product of the operation of the act; (2) conduct of special studies relating to administrative problems; and (3) initiation of studies bearing upon the long-term economic program. All three types of studies produce results that are either immediately or potentially useful resources for groups that are concerned to achieve an orderly development of group provisions. The figures presented in the *Social Security Bulletin* showing volume and cost of the public assistance programs in the states, for example, provide many useful comparisons. State departments of welfare often use these figures to indicate whether their standards of public assistance are above or below the standards in neighboring states. The administrative studies likewise frequently reveal inadequacies in the security provisions and thus suggest problems to which social-planning groups will wish to direct attention. For example, studies of the experience-rating schemes in the state unemployment compensation acts have thrown light upon such questions as the effect of these provisions upon benefit payments and upon the financial structure of state programs. The investigation of long-term economic problems may likewise produce material suitable for use in com-

<sup>43</sup> *First Annual Report of the Social Security Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1936*, pp. 34-36.

<sup>44</sup> See above, p. 607.

<sup>45</sup> See *First Annual Report . . .*, 1936, pp. 59-61; and *Sixth Annual Report . . .*, 1941, pp. 61-67, 107-10, 130-32, 141-47.

munity-planning activities, as indicated by the following illustrative list of studies undertaken in this area during the board's first year of operation: trends in markets, technology, and business organization and their effects upon employment; migration and the mobility of labor; fiscal capacities of the states; possible effect of cyclical fluctuations on sources of funds and benefits.<sup>46</sup> The data resulting from these various types of studies are usually presented either as special reports or in one of the several regular publications now issued by the board.<sup>47</sup> Although most of this material is useful and informative, perhaps no one service conducted by the board met a more widespread demand than its monthly compilations of public assistance statistics. For many years various groups advocated that nation-wide current figures on the volume and costs of these services be provided, but this recommendation produced comparatively meager results until federal funds became available, first for unemployment relief and later for the specialized public assistance programs. Under the Social Security Board these series of data have steadily improved in quality and have come to be regarded as a basic resource among social-planning groups.

The board has not hesitated to make specific recommendations to Congress and to the state legislatures respecting needed improvements in security legislation. In 1938 it proposed<sup>48</sup> that the Social Security Act be amended to require state agencies to establish and maintain personnel standards based on a merit system. The following year Congress adopted this recommendation. In the same year (1938) the board also suggested that the federal matching for Aid to Dependent Children be placed on the same percentage basis as for Old Age Assistance. Congress likewise followed this suggestion. Of course, some of the board's recommendations have not been accepted. In January, 1939, the President transmitted to Congress both the report of the Advisory Council on Social Security<sup>49</sup> and the recommendations made by the board itself.<sup>50</sup> The two documents were in agreement with respect to a considerable number of basic questions. Congress has chosen to act on some of these matters and to defer consideration of others. For example, the proposal that survivors of insured

<sup>46</sup> *First Annual Report . . .*, 1936, pp. 60-61.

<sup>47</sup> For a list of the board's publications see *Fourth Annual Report of the Social Security Board*, 1939, pp. 294-97; for a description of the current periodical publications see *Sixth Annual Report . . .*, 1941, p. 206.

<sup>48</sup> *Third Annual Report of the Social Security Board*, 1938, pp. 13-14.

<sup>49</sup> See above, p. 609.

<sup>50</sup> *Proposed Changes in the Social Security Act*. Social Security Board, 1939. Pp. 29.

workers be made eligible for benefit has been adopted, but the suggestion that employees of private nonprofit agencies be included in the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance system has not yet been enacted into law.

Although Congress may see fit in the future to institute changes in the content and in the present administrative provisions of the social security program, it seems unlikely that the basic services guaranteed under this system will ever be materially curtailed. Millions of individuals now have a direct personal interest in the preservation of rights which the Social Security Act confers upon them and which their own financial contributions are helping to sustain. These persons will expect Congress and the state legislatures to conserve these rights. Moreover, the federal services resulting from the operation of the act appear to have won widespread approval. Groups concerned with the community organization process, both at the state and at the local levels, have found these services a very helpful resource. The factual data are both more comprehensive and more accurate than the smaller jurisdictions could compile. The consultation services with respect to legislation and administrative practices rest upon a wider base of experience than can readily be drawn upon by the states and their political subdivisions. The public relations activities of state and local departments are likewise reinforced and guided by the interpretative efforts of the central authority. The compelling need to relieve hardship has stimulated the development of federal-state and state-local relationships under the guidance of the Social Security Board that are generally believed to be among the most promising of the legacies inherited from the depression period of the 1930's.

#### THE NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD

The National Resources Planning Board was, for a decade, the planning agency of the Executive Office of the President of the United States.<sup>51</sup> Its broad general purpose was to substitute orderly evolution based on foresight for the impromptu changes hastily designed to meet immediate emergencies that had previously characterized most of the social development in this country.

This board was abolished as of August 31, 1943, by act of Congress.

<sup>51</sup> The history of the successive authorizations under which the work of the board was developed may be traced in the following documents: Federal Employment Stabilization Act of 1931; Public Law 616 (February 10, 1931); N.I.R.A., Title II (48 Stat. 200 [1933]); P.W.A. Circular No. 1 (1933); Executive Order No. 6623 (March 1, 1934); Executive Order No. 6777 (June 30, 1934); Executive Order No. 7065 (June 7, 1935); Reorganization Act of 1939 (Pub. Law 19, April 3, 1939); President's Reorganization Plan No. 1 (April 25, 1939), made effective by Pub. Res. No. 20 (76th Cong.); Executive Order No. 8248 (September 8, 1939); Executive Order No. 8455 (June 26, 1940).

Moreover, the act provided that the functions exercised by the board were not to be transferred to any other department of the federal government except in so far as might thereafter be provided by Congress. Thus Congress expressed definite hostility to this central national planning agency. Many observers believe that this action was inspired by an assortment of personal hostilities rather than by sound thinking. The abolition of the board seems to imply a belief that piecemeal developments are superior to an over-all view—a belief which is not shared by large numbers of the citizens of the country. Hence there is some reason to hope that ultimately some type of federal over-all planning agency may be re-established. For this reason it seems worth while to examine briefly the work of the National Resources Planning Board, even though it has ceased to exist.

The board was composed of three members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The employed staff operated under a director who was selected by the board, appointed by the President, and confirmed by the Senate. Activities were organized under three divisions, each headed by an assistant director. On November 1, 1942, the total employed staff in the central office numbered 170 and in the eleven field offices, 87. The board also made use of numerous technical committees consisting of experts selected from both inside and outside the government.

The functions that were intrusted to the board may be summarized as follows:

1. To collect and make available to the President such plans, data, and information as may be helpful to a planned development and use of national resources and to recommend to the President and the Congress long-time plans and programs for the wise use and fullest development of such resources.

2. To advise the President from time to time of the trend of employment and business activity and of the existence or approach of periods of business depression and unemployment and to recommend measures leading to the improvement and stabilization of economic conditions.

3. To collect information concerning advance construction plans and estimates by all federal agencies, the states, municipalities, and other public and private agencies, to consult with such agencies in developing orderly programs of public works, and to list for the President and the Congress all proposed public works in the order of their relative importance with respect to (a) the greatest good to the greatest number of people, (b) the emergency necessities of the nation, and (c) the social, economic, and cultural advancement of the people of the United States.

4. To receive and record all proposed federal projects involving the



acquisition of land (including transfer of land jurisdiction) and land-research projects, and, in an advisory capacity, to provide the agencies concerned with such information or data as may be pertinent to the projects.

5. To consult and co-operate with agencies of the federal government, with the states and municipalities or agencies thereof, and with any public or private planning or research agencies or institutions, in formulating methods of advance planning and to act as a clearing house and means of co-ordination for planning activities linking together various levels and fields of planning, and to make progress reports.<sup>52</sup>

In the period following its inception in the early 1930's, the board directed its attention to a wide variety of problems, some of which were referred to it directly by the President. Its published reports soon mounted to an impressive total. Some of its planning related to fields that may, at first, seem remote from the field of social welfare. It devoted considerable attention, for example, to such problems as transportation, water plans for drainage basins, energy resources, policy considerations in industrial location, etc. But, as the experience of the Tennessee Valley Authority suggests, problems of social welfare cannot be isolated from the economic and political framework within which they occur. To a very considerable degree the framework itself produces the dislocations that engender the social welfare problems. Hence, in a very fundamental sense, planning that seeks to find ways to harness natural resources and to shape industrial and agricultural production to meet the needs of human beings is the foundation stone upon which most other types of planning must rest.

In addition to the consideration it gave to these basic economic problems, the board also concerned itself specifically with the study of the human resources of the nation; for, as it asserted in one of its reports: "No economic system is an end in itself; rather, it is merely a means employed to satisfy human wants."<sup>53</sup> In pursuance of this policy, the board gave extensive consideration to future needs in the field of social welfare as traditionally defined. Typical of these efforts were the studies entitled *Urban Conservation and Development*, *Planning for Social Security*, *Postwar Planning for Children and Youth*, and *Security, Work, and Relief Policies*. Undoubtedly the future course of social welfare programs in this country will be greatly influenced by the recommendations in these reports. It is worth noting that plans developed in this way by a permanent agency that is

<sup>52</sup> This summary was collated from National Resources Planning Board, *Report for 1942*, and previous reports.

<sup>53</sup> *Development of Resources and Stabilization of Employment in the United States*, Part I: *The Federal Program for National Development* (National Resources Planning Board, January, 1941), p. 3.

also giving thought to related problems in economics will presumably receive more sustained attention than plans suggested by special short-term commissions or advisory committees. Hitherto, in this country, we have often relied upon special commissions or committees to study specific assignments and to make recommendations. Usually, after their reports are rendered, such groups are released from further responsibility. A continuing group, such as the board was believed to be, gains experience and skill as it proceeds and also, presumably, is in a favored position to reach sound conclusions because of its ability to relate the plans in one field to those under consideration in allied areas. Hence, it would appear that the federal government will sooner or later see the wisdom of re-establishing in one form or another an agency to carry on continuing planning activities.

In recent years, popular imagination in this country has been fired with the idea of planning. Although many of the federal agencies have been actively engaged for some time in formulating developmental schemes with respect to the services for which they are responsible, specific activity along these lines has, until recently, been less widely practiced in the states and their local political subdivisions. Since 1934, however, there has been a great increase in interest in planning in hundreds of state and local units. State planning boards now exist in 45 states and at least a half-dozen regional planning agencies have been established.<sup>54</sup> City planning boards have also increased in number, and many of the older ones have enlarged the scope of their operations. Fifteen hundred county planning boards have also come into existence, though these have, in the main, concerned themselves thus far chiefly with agricultural problems of land use. Departmental and interdepartmental planning groups are likewise emerging at the federal, state, and local levels to deal with problems on a regional basis, especially in depressed areas. In addition, a large number of private agencies have embarked upon programs of social and economic planning.<sup>55</sup> This widespread concern for careful advance planning is undoubtedly a cause for gratification. But the very multiplicity of these endeavors might also easily defeat their purpose. The plans developed by one group might run counter to those proposed by another. Hence the need for clearance and co-ordination among the planning agencies is apparent. At one time it seemed that the National Resources Planning Board was

<sup>54</sup> *National Resources Development Report for 1942* (National Resources Planning Board), p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> The number of planning agencies in this country has now reached impressive proportions. For a list of these agencies and a brief statement of their programs, see George B. Galloway, *Postwar Planning in the United States* (1942).

the agency that should undertake to relate the activities of these numerous groups to one another. The wording of the acts and executive orders relating to the board also suggested that it was the intent of Congress and of the President for the board to assume this co-ordinating function. The abolition of the board, however, has at least temporarily put an end to this plan.

If a central planning agency is re-established by the federal government at some future time, it is to be hoped that it will be asked to correlate the work of these other planning organizations. The central body should, of course, not seek to impose its views upon other planning groups. Its obligation would be to make sure that these groups did not arrive at final recommendations without first having had access to what had already been done and what was currently under way with respect to the areas of their special concern. Undoubtedly, local planning boards will sometimes arrive at conclusions inconsistent with those of state or regional boards or of the national planning agency itself. This is not in itself a cause for concern, provided the local board has acted after giving careful attention to the thinking of the groups with which its own views conflict. Differences of opinion about the wisest future course are inevitable and, in many instances, valuable. But these differences should reflect variations in political and social philosophy rather than mere unawareness of the total volume of evidence available for consideration.

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## DOCUMENT 16-A

### REPORT OF SECTION IV, GREAT LAKES INSTITUTE, 1932<sup>56</sup>

#### I. TITLE

Actual discussion has broadened the assigned topic in some respects and narrowed it in others.

The topic given was "The Relation of Governmental to Voluntary Agencies." The questions so focused attention upon the administration of *relief* that discussion of relationship of agencies was limited to those agencies in the relief-giving field. Both in answering the questions and in approaching the subject of relationships of agencies, attention had first to be given to problems of relief administration under present conditions before the relation between public and private agencies in that field could profitably be discussed.

The actual topic discussed, therefore, became "The Administration of Relief in the Present Industrial Situation and the Part that Public and Private Agencies Should Take in the Program."

#### II. INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

Before industry was so highly organized, the need for relief was largely due to individual problems, either within the person himself or in his particular circumstances. Social work has therefore been based on the effort to adjust individual difficulties. Now, while individual maladjustments continue in great numbers of cases, an overwhelming load of relief need arises from economic conditions quite outside the individual and impossible of solution on an individual basis. Many individuals perfectly capable of managing their own affairs with ability and judgment in ordinary times find themselves helpless and in want because of the present economic conditions. That economic security basic to sound individual and social life is now lacking for great numbers of people. The fact that millions of persons are in a state of need that they cannot meet by their own efforts is evidence of the need of a change in the system of industry and the distribution of income. Nothing less can finally meet the need.

One of the first steps for industry and government to take is the establishment of unemployment insurance to meet the greater part of the need.

<sup>56</sup> Great Lakes Institute, College Camp, Wisconsin, July 2, 1932. Report made by Amelia Sears, chairman; Gertrude Vaile, vice-chairman; and Clara Paul Paige, secretary.

Well-administered relief should supplement the insurance in order to meet special needs of individuals.

Relief differs from insurance in that, while each may be provided by law, the insurance is a right based upon previously determined conditions of eligibility (chiefly the fact of unemployment), while relief is based upon current needs. Relief, even at its best, can never take the place of unemployment insurance in that it negates the principle of social justice inherent in insurance.

Lacking unemployment insurance, relief must not only provide, in such measure as may be possible, economic security for persons who have lost it through general industrial conditions but must also supply those special needs peculiar to the individual. The need of filling both roles places upon relief administrations some difficult problems not heretofore faced.

There should be clear differentiation in treatment between that group of persons suffering from relatively uncomplicated unemployment in a time of widespread industrial depression and that group of persons whose need is due to more individual factors within themselves or their circumstances. Administration of relief to the first group should be on a formal basis much akin to that of social insurance. The dignity of this group can best be conserved by an objective determination of eligibility for relief, according to criteria of need previously determined, and the granting of relief in definite uniform proportions according to such eligibility.

Relief to the second group should be on a more extensive case work basis.

Transfer from the first to the second group should be readily made as special needs appear. The second group, which is the basic relief responsibility of communities in normal times, will inevitably be greatly augmented and become an immensely heavier community burden by additions from the first group of those who may be unable to readjust themselves as economic conditions improve—people who lose courage and ambition through enforced idleness; middle-aged people who grow old before their time; children and young folks gone awry through the stresses and strains of disturbed home conditions. Any plan of relief administration should be prepared to handle well both groups, and both public and private agencies should participate.

### III. TREATMENT-INTAKE

In handling the unemployed group the method should differ from that of ordinary case work, which deals with the maladjustments of individuals. In order to carry out the principles of objective treatment previously

enunciated for this group and, at the same time, to discover persons needing the more individual treatment suggested for Group II, the following procedure is suggested:

1. The applicant for aid should be given a blank form covering the information required in order to determine his eligibility for relief, this blank to be filled in by the applicant at the office or at his home and to be supported by objective data, such as employment record and proof of residence.

2. The name should be cleared in the confidential exchange.

3. This information should be followed by an interview with a competent case worker, which should:

- a) Give the person an opportunity to tell his troubles as he sees them with assurance of a sympathetic and intelligent hearing.
- b) Give the interviewer opportunity to discover in what group this person probably belongs. At this point of intake, additional information from other sources may be required in order that the person may be treated in accordance with his needs.

If no serious problems other than unemployment appear, the case should be treated as of Group I. If problems appear which require more special individual attention, the case should be treated as of Group II.

#### IV. TREATMENT OF GROUP I

For Group I, the unemployed group, the only real solution is *employment*. Failing this, the relief program should include: (A) work relief (preferably); (B) direct relief (if work relief is unavailable); (C) the maintenance of morale and health.

It is advisable to have in the emergency unemployment relief program both direct relief and work relief, both governmental and nongovernmental.

##### A. Work relief

###### 1. Advantages

If well planned and supervised

- a) It keeps up morale.
- b) It gives a permanent community result of value.

###### 2. Disadvantages

- a) It is more expensive
  - (1) Per unit of work
  - (2) Per person or family



- b) It tends to increase the number of applications.
  - c) It may seriously unbalance the budget.
  - d) Unless well planned and supervised, it becomes a farce by undertaking useless tasks of no value to the community, and it may be actually demoralizing to the individual by encouraging slack work and by giving him a feeling of merely putting in time on work of no value.
  - e) When the work relief program is extensive, there is the danger that it may disrupt the ordinary labor market unless the work planned is that which otherwise would not be done.
  - f) It might have an effect upon the wage scale unless the hourly rate paid is the current scale.
3. Some basic principles of administration of work relief
- Where work relief is used
- a) It is necessary that the selection of persons receiving such work relief be made on the basis of need, as no work program can provide for all the unemployed.
  - b) In placing men in work relief the best personnel practices should be followed as far as possible, special consideration being given to the worker's physical condition.
  - c) Where possible, placement should be made through state employment offices.
  - d) All men employed on relief work should be covered by compensation insurance.
  - e) Work relief should be on a part-time basis in order that the person should have time to look for regular employment and should not regard this made work as a substitute for such regular employment.
  - f) The amount of work should be an element in the relief budget.

**B. Direct relief**

Direct relief for the unemployed must be used where work relief cannot successfully be planned and financed and still leave adequate provision for those for whom work relief is not suitable.

Relief provided through either work relief or direct relief should be given on a budgetary basis determined according to the family's need on an agreed and understood relief basis.

The persons should be told of opportunities for education, recreation, and health services and encouraged to take advantage of them.

Means must be taken through periodic field visits and office mechanisms to keep informed regarding the continuance of need. In lack of a

well-integrated system of federal, state, and local employment agencies, it is difficult to know when a man returns to work unless he reports the fact. The great majority of persons in Group I are self-respecting citizens who respond to frank, fair treatment in similar spirit. Yet it must be recognized that there are those who will take advantage and that even a few who continue to receive aid after need is past may make heavy drains upon limited relief funds and bring serious public criticism upon the administration.

Summarizing, then, the problem of treatment for Group I, three objectives have always to be kept in mind:

1. To give the needed relief in a way that preserves the dignity of the recipient.
2. To know when relief can properly be discontinued.
3. To recognize special need and, if indicated, transfer the person to Group II for more individual attention or refer to other resources.

#### V. TREATMENT OF GROUP II

If other than unemployment problems appear, the person should be treated as of Group II on a careful case work basis, whether by public or by private agency.

Some will need case work services to change their particular circumstances and opportunities.

Others will need case work skill to effect personality adjustments.

#### VI. PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES

In this program both public and private agencies and resources are needed. Before division of work can be determined, the following factors must be taken into account:

1. The state of community thinking about social needs and about governmental and individual responsibility toward them
2. The existing legislation
3. The freedom of the public department from improper political influence
4. The existing personnel in the two agencies and the possibilities of securing and keeping good personnel
5. The possibilities of adequate financing
  - a) From tax funds
  - b) From private contributions
6. The state of development of the agencies concerned, both public and

private and their probable ability to achieve and maintain high standards of work.

With the above conditions in mind, it is clear that no categorical statements can be made about the division of work between public and private agencies.

The provision of basic necessities for persons who cannot provide them for themselves is a responsibility primarily of the tax funds, as is clearly seen in the laws of the various states. But the demands of good citizenship and humanity place heavy responsibilities upon private effort. It is also true that official responsibility cannot be maintained on a high and stable basis without the active interest of good citizenship.

The particular function of the private agencies in this field is to bridge the gap between what the public agency may be able to do at any given time and the ideal of forward-looking citizens.

The following divisions of work are suggested for practical consideration to be modified in accordance with the preceding principles.

#### For Group I:

- A. This is mainly a responsibility of the tax fund
- B. But the private agencies may need to assist with
  - 1. Special provisions of work relief and other means towards self-maintenance, such as gardens
  - 2. The provision of special kinds of relief which the private agency may be able to secure and which the public department cannot at the time provide, such as ice, dental care, etc.
  - 3. The provision of educational and recreational opportunities for the maintenance of morale, such as courses in nutrition and gardening

#### For Group II:

- A. Responsibility for those persons needing individual case work service should be divided between public and private agencies on some agreed basis according to the ability of the respective agencies to render the service needed.
- B. There should be a clear-cut division of cases, any given case being handled in general by either the public or the private agency, but not by both.
  - 1. Where the public agency is not prepared to do case work, no division should be attempted by type of case except possibly to leave to the public department old age and other permanent physical disa-

bilities. For certain cases it is possible that the private agency will have to supplement the work of the public agency.

2. When both the public and private agencies do good case work, each agency should handle completely the cases for which it is responsible, and the division should be made on the basis of type of case, the public agency taking, in general, those types involving the heaviest relief. This distinction would leave for the private agency many cases of adjustment and personality problems which might or might not involve relief.

#### VII. DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY IN FINANCING

##### PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES

In principle we believe that subsidy of public to private agencies is undesirable except to meet an emergency.

Before subsidy is granted, a group, intelligently representative of taxing bodies, public administrative bodies, chest-council agencies, and private family service agencies should focus attention upon the two questions of community resources, tax and private, and efficient organization and method in administering these resources. The following questions must be answered before subsidy is considered:

1. To what extent are tax funds available to meet the needs?
2. What resources are available from voluntary contributions?

In general, subsidy should be given to supplement the resources of private agencies only after their own resources are exhausted.

When a subsidy is granted, it should not stand in the way of the development of the public agency. However, as the public agency is being developed to assume the major relief burden, it may be preferable during such transition period to subsidize the private agency rather than have the public agency so swamped that it cannot be equipped to meet the situation.

When a subsidy is granted, both the public authority granting the subsidy and the private agency receiving it should participate in the administration under a joint administrative and policy-forming committee.

This committee should be responsible for maintaining high professional standards of social work service.

The responsibility for relief to persons in need is first local; if local authorities are unable to meet it, the state is next responsible to supplement the local resources; if local and state resources are still inadequate, federal funds should aid the state and local forces.

As the burden of relief becomes greater, it is clear that local tax funds

and contributions frequently cannot adequately meet it. Local tax funds are generally based upon property rather than upon income. This is not an equitable distribution of the burden, nor does it provide adequate funds.

In some states the problem has been fairly satisfactorily met by state funds based upon a different system of taxation. But even this does not make a nationally equitable plan, and it is apparent that, as the need continues, support must come from federal taxation placed upon those best able to bear it.

If federal aid is granted, the principles of subsidy to private agencies previously outlined hold.

Finally, in the joint community program the private agencies have a continuing responsibility to support good work after it has been established in a public department. Both public and private agencies must ceaselessly work for that community understanding which alone makes possible good standards of social work in public or private agencies in any community.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE DECADES AHEAD

AMOS WARNER, writing in 1894, described the local pattern of social services as follows: "The charities of a given locality which should for useful result be systematically directed to the accomplishment of their common purposes, are usually a chaos, a patchwork of survivals, or products of contending political, religious, and medical factions, a curious compound in which a strong ingredient is ignorance perpetuated by heedlessness."<sup>1</sup> He cites numerous specific situations throughout his book in support of this generalization. Some of these indictments are worth recalling.

He describes the indoor relief of his day in these words: "The almshouse is the fundamental institution in American poor relief. It cares for all the abjectly destitute not otherwise provided for. Its shelter is the guarantee against starvation which the State offers to all, no matter how unfortunate or degraded. Consequently the inmates of the almshouse are often the most sodden driftwood from the social wreckage of the time. It is ordinarily a depressing experience to visit an almshouse, and accordingly we find it an institution that even the benevolent willingly forget."<sup>2</sup>

Among the reasons for the wretched conditions prevailing in almshouses, he enumerates the following: "dishonest or wasteful management of the funds; culpable stinginess on the part of the appropriating power, resulting in inadequate or unhealthful food, lack of proper buildings, heating apparatus, clothing, and so forth; insanitary conditions, including dirt and vermin; and finally, actual cruelty, resulting from either brutality or neglect on the part of the officials in charge."<sup>3</sup>

Existing practices in the administration of outdoor relief he found equally objectionable. "As administered in the United States," he said, "it is found apparently that out-door relief educates more people for the

<sup>1</sup> Amos G. Warner, *American Charities* (1894 ed.), pp. 357-58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139-40.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.

almshouse than it keeps out of it, and that therefore it is neither economical nor kindly."<sup>4</sup> After describing the evils that had been exposed in the outdoor relief activities in New York, Philadelphia, California, and elsewhere, he sums the entire situation up in these words: "Nearly all the experiences in this country indicate that out-door relief is a source of corruption to politics, of expense to the community, and of degradation and increased pauperization to the poor."<sup>5</sup>

Provision for the sick poor was likewise found to be riddled with grave abuses. "The competition of medical schools, or schools of medicine, and of individual institutions, is usually so great," he declared, "that no one willing to put up with the inconvenience, and to take the risks of free hospital treatment, is refused. . . . That people are admitted to free beds without investigation is especially true in those places where the private institutions admit patients for whom the municipality or county pays the bill. . . . The evil conditions to which a great hospital may be brought by the reign of ward politics was formerly perfectly illustrated in the Bellevue Hospital, New York, and now, perhaps, is best illustrated in the Cook County Hospital of Chicago. At the International Congress of Charities, Dr. Burdett of London said that the management of the institution, except among the nurses, was characterized by an absence of all conscience. He added, 'I have never seen anything in the whole course of my experience, and I have visited hospitals in every country in the world, including Russia, which has gone so straight to my heart, which has been so appalling and awful, as what I saw in my visit to the Cook County Hospital.' At this hospital the officers are appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. They are appointed for purely political reasons, and usually change each year. At San Francisco the conditions are equally bad."<sup>6</sup>

The care of the defective classes is described, for the most part, in conjunction with the discussion of almshouses; for the almshouses still sheltered very large numbers of such cases. Although improvements in the care of the insane had resulted from the work of Dorothea L. Dix, Warner's investigations led to the conclusion that "the great expense of providing for the increasing numbers of the chronic insane has led to a suspension of their transfer from the almshouses to specialized asylums."<sup>7</sup> With respect to the feeble-minded, he discovered that "the movement for state educational institutions for the feeble-minded has only recently made much headway, and the custodial care of feeble-minded adults in special institutions is not yet attained in more than one or two states."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 245-47.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-75.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

As for epileptics, he reported that "the first special public institution for epileptics has recently been founded in Ohio."<sup>9</sup>

The able-bodied unemployed presented a problem which appeared to defy solution. At any rate, Warner, after acknowledging that provision for this group was "the most difficult problem in the whole realm of poor relief," passed quickly on to other subjects. He said that special relief work for the unemployed was currently under way "on a scale never before known or needed in this country" and that it was therefore not yet possible to evaluate these efforts. Insurance against involuntary unemployment is, of course, not mentioned. Likewise, there was evidently as yet no recognition of the possibility of pooling risks through the development of systems of workmen's compensation. Statistics are quoted to show the seriousness of the problem of industrial accidents, but the remedy suggested is improvement in and extension of legislation to protect workers against dangerous machinery and unsafe working conditions. No mention is made of any special provision to care for those incapacitated by such accidents.

Warner found that services for dependent children were in the main very defective. Foundling homes, in particular, had unsavory records. "In a majority of instances," said Warner, "it can matter but little to the individual infant whether it is murdered outright or is placed in a foundling hospital—death comes only a little sooner in one case than in the other. This fact, that foundling hospitals are, for the most part, places where infants die, is not sufficiently appreciated by the public. A death-rate of 97 per cent per annum for children under three years of age is not uncommon."<sup>10</sup>

The view that pensions might be made available to the aged had not yet gained currency. On this subject Warner reported: "The very serious agitation in England for a system of relief for the aged more honorable than that afforded by the poor-law authorities has crystallized about the idea of old-age pensions. It seemed likely for a time to carry everything before it. . . . The agitation at present seems to have lost some of its force but will probably come up again in other forms until something results from it. No analogous agitation has taken place in the United States. . . ."<sup>11</sup>

Very little was as yet available in the way of education for social work, but Warner, at least, recognized the need for developments in this area. On this subject, he said: "As charities become complex, and as social sci-

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 204-5.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295 n.



ence and philanthropology come to be better understood, and consequently more and more useful, it is found that the man with definite preparation for charitable work has an advantage over a man of similar ability not specially prepared. The development of a new profession is manifestly under way. As yet preparation is obtained mainly through experience, as doctors of medicine used to obtain their training by being in the office of an established practitioner; but this condition of things will be progressively modified in one line of practice as it has been in the other."<sup>12</sup>

It is difficult to realize that these descriptions of social provisions relate to a period scarcely two generations past. Within a span of less than fifty years, phenomenal improvements have been achieved. In many jurisdictions almshouses have completely disappeared because better means of caring for the poor have been devised. Specialized institutions for the mentally ill, the epileptic, and the feeble-minded have been developed—usually at the state level—and, as a result, the almshouses still in existence rarely, if ever, present the depressing picture of variegated miseries so movingly described by Warner. Although the state institutions for defectives sometimes fall short of desirable standards, most of them are now subject to careful inspection and have gradually won the confidence of the people.

Outdoor relief remains a stepchild among the social services, but has, nevertheless, in hundreds of jurisdictions been improved almost beyond recognition. In lieu of deterrent doles, there is now scientific budgeting; in lieu of graft, there is state supervision and auditing; in lieu of pauperization, there is an aggressive effort to study the client's needs and to help him achieve independence; in lieu of political patronage, there are minimum qualifications for employed personnel and a merit system of appointment. The foregoing list does not exhaust the record of improvements, nor can these reforms be said to have been achieved everywhere. In many places outdoor relief is actually nonexistent, not because better provisions are available, but because government has chosen to ignore the need. Here and there it is still administered in ways that are reminiscent of Warner's day. But that the total picture has been vastly improved is beyond all doubt.

Undoubtedly the most significant changes, however, have been in the direction of departing entirely from both the outdoor and the indoor services of the Poor Law. The old age pensions that loomed vaguely on the horizon in 1894 have become a reality. Government has likewise accepted responsibility for helping necessitous mothers in order that they may de-

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 402-3.

vote their time to the rearing of their children. Many infants that might earlier have died in foundling homes or have been intrusted to other questionable forms of care can now receive the individualized attention to which they are entitled. Men and women who are incapacitated in industrial accidents are not now thrown immediately upon the dubious resources of local pauper relief. In every state but one a system of workmen's compensation is in operation. Nor is unemployment accepted as an evil against which little or no advance provision can be made. Some degree of protection against want induced by involuntary unemployment is afforded in every state through systems of unemployment compensation that operate under the general guidance of the federal government itself. Moreover, plans under consideration may result in further protection against unemployment through the creation of a pool of public works projects that may be quickly placed in operation whenever recessions in private industry throw excessive numbers of workers onto the labor market.

Important advances have also been made in the field of medical care. This has been due chiefly to enlargements in the field of medical knowledge, to improved medical and nursing education, to better standards of clinic and hospital administration, and to the development and extension of medical social service—a function unknown in Warner's day. The distribution of medical services, however, remains still an unsolved problem. During the past decade public opinion has become aroused over this subject, and the indications are that, before long, wider availability of these services will be demanded. A start in this direction has, in fact, already been made through federal grants to the states for the furtherance of specific programs in behalf of maternity and infancy, control of venereal diseases, and the development of public health units. These beginnings, however, seem likely to be supplemented by federal grants for the construction of hospitals and clinics in uncovered territories and by some form of insurance to provide both medical care and cash benefits during periods of disabling illness. The great difference, perhaps, between Warner's day and the present has been the growth of public understanding of the relationship between (1) the health and efficiency of the individual and (2) the responsibility of the community for insuring access to the services upon which positive physical and mental well-being depend.

The period since 1894 has also witnessed great expansions and improvements in the field of private social work. Warner, who had served as general agent of the Charity Organization Society of Baltimore, declared that the chaotic pattern of services there was typical of what existed in most cities at that time. He described the situation as follows: "In Balti-

more, for instance, it will be found that there are societies to relieve any need whatever of particular classes of persons. The Hebrew Benevolent will do this for Israelites, the German Society for Germans, the St. Andrew's Society for the Scotch, the denominational societies for those of their faith and for an undetermined number of outsiders. On the other hand, there are societies that will relieve any person whatever in some particular way. The Poor Association will give coal and groceries to any applicant it considers worthy, without regard to religion, race, or color. The dispensaries will give medicine, the sewing societies clothing, and so on. It will be noticed that the lines of activity intersect. The classification by race overlaps that by religion, while the classification by need overlies them both, and several agencies for the same sort of work are superimposed upon the others, while unlimited claims upon individual benevolence supplement or duplicate the whole."<sup>13</sup>

Although it is still true that private social work in urban communities is much too highly segmented, something approaching order has been brought out of the chaos. Councils of social agencies have been created all over the country and have provided the agencies with a medium through which orderly arrangements have been effected. Community chests have likewise contributed to this result and have, in addition, provided enlarged resources for the development of private agency programs. As a result, many of the private agencies have been able to devote major effort to the elevation of standards, to promoting public understanding of social problems, and to various kinds of experimental and demonstrational ventures. In brief, the private agencies, in many instances, have been able to concentrate upon the kind of contribution they are best suited to make and need no longer be bogged down by futile efforts to encompass entire areas of need.

Rural communities have likewise participated in these advances. Much of the pioneer work in rural counties was undertaken by private agencies—particularly by the Red Cross—during and after World War I. The introduction to social problems and to social work methods acquired at that time undoubtedly prepared many rural communities for a more informed approach to the grave problems of unemployment that descended upon them in the 1930's. This experience, in turn, paved the way for the new services ushered in by the Social Security Act of 1935. At present there is not a county in the United States that is totally without some one of the modern welfare services. This development exceeds in importance any of the antecedent improvements; for it provides, within government itself, a

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 374.

nation-wide network of services through which something approaching a national minimum level of well-being and security may ultimately be guaranteed.

Warner's prediction with respect to the professionalization of social work is also well on the way toward realization. Schools of social work—nonexistent in his day—have undergone a lusty development since the turn of the century. More than forty accredited schools are now in operation, most of them functioning under the auspices of recognized universities. Several vigorous professional associations have also been created and are making important contributions to the improvement of professional practice and to the furthering of professional education. Some progress has even been made toward state certification of social workers. Even in the absence of this sanction, unqualified individuals are experiencing increasing difficulty in obtaining employment. Most of the leading public and private agencies now refuse to consider applicants who are unable to submit professional credentials. The resulting gain in the quality of service available to distressed persons is incalculable.

How can we account for these and the other great advances in social welfare that have occurred within the last fifty years? To what extent can these phenomenal improvements be attributed to successful application of the community organization process on the part of social workers and of laymen identified with social agencies? To what extent are they the result of efforts of other groups that have had little or no direct relationship with social work programs, such, for example, as labor unions, women's clubs, and fraternal societies? These questions are difficult, if not impossible, to answer. Yet nothing would be more immediately useful than an analysis that would reveal clearly the methods that have been primarily responsible for these improvements and that would indicate the kinds of group leadership that have proved to be effective.

The best that can be done at present is to evaluate past experiences carefully on the basis of such records as now exist. This is, of course, the method used by historians. But there is agreement among historians that careful additions to existing archives in the current generation determine, in large measure, the degree of accuracy that can be attained by future scholars who undertake to interpret events now taking place. Moreover, historians sometimes complain because past generations placed emphasis largely upon the preservation of political documents. Hence in recent decades there has been an increasing tendency to accumulate and conserve records of the less spectacular social developments. Should social workers, perhaps, borrow a page from this experience? Is it a possibility that, in

the future, some groups might assume responsibility for acquiring records that relate to conscious efforts to achieve increased integration of purpose with respect to social security and social welfare? If so, where should this responsibility rest? An obvious answer is that those in daily contact with any process are in a favored position to make observations with respect to it. But can an adequate method be developed that will seem sufficiently promising to evoke long-continued co-operation? Clearly, an affirmative answer to this query is required unless we are to believe that we are incapable of improving upon the methods that have been used in the past.

In various fields of social science it has long been well established that accurate information concerning contemporary problems can best be obtained by adhering to a procedure which may be summarized as follows: (1) define the problem clearly; (2) formulate specific questions which, if adequately answered, will throw light on the problem as defined; (3) instal record systems in the places where the facts become known, which, if carefully sustained, will supply answers to these questions; (4) provide central supervision of the various agents responsible for the current recording of the desired information. This procedure needs no defense. It has proved its worth in many situations, as, for example, in obtaining accurate death rates. But it would be misleading to imply that the problem of recording data concerning a *process*, such as community organization, is as uncomplicated as the recording of an objective *event*, such as a death. No guaranty can be made that the recommended procedure, when applied to an elusive process, will produce satisfying results. Nevertheless, the improved understanding of the case work process that has resulted from the analysis of recorded experiences has inspired belief that a planned approach to the study of the community organization process will also be productive. Although prophecy is hazardous, present indications suggest that the social work field seems likely to give increased attention to this problem in the years immediately ahead.

The structure through which the community organization process operates will, of course, undergo changes in the future as it has in the past. Some of the existing agencies, such as the social service exchange, seem likely to be extended in scope and expanded in function to meet new needs that arise as our system of social welfare provisions matures. Doubtless some of the voluntary organizations may be able to shift their responsibilities to governmental agencies. It would not be surprising, for example, if protection against fraudulent charitable solicitations would ultimately be afforded through an official system of licensing, combined perhaps, with responsibility for effecting mergers of duplicating services along the lines

now presaged by the activities of the President's War Relief Control Board.

The area of social planning has tended in recent years to become a major concern of government. There are hazards, of course, in this approach, though the risks are no greater than in any activity that must inevitably be influenced to some extent by the political philosophy of the dominant majority. It is clear that the planning of social welfare developments should be related to the planning in the broader fields within which the social services operate. That this integration can be achieved by any organization less comprehensive than government itself seems doubtful. Actually, governmental planning with respect to social welfare is by no means a recent development. It has been going on in legislative bodies, often in inconspicuous or even ineffective ways, for generations. Much of this planning has related to the care of the blind, the insane, and other handicapped groups. In addition, both at the state and the federal levels, major planning ventures have been launched periodically, usually with respect either to a definite problem or to the needs of a specific group. The reports of the United States Immigration Commission of 1911, of the United States National (Wickersham) Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement of 1930-31, and of the California State Unemployment Commission of 1932, provide illustrations of these more comprehensive and more widely publicized undertakings. In brief, governmental responsibility for planning is not new. The new element is the growing conviction that this responsibility should be exercised continuously rather than sporadically, that it should rest upon permanent rather than upon *ad hoc* bodies, and that planning with respect to the social services should be related to the planning in allied areas. In addition, the opinion is increasingly stressed that planning groups are needed at the local, state, and regional levels and that the federal government should provide leadership in coordinating the work both of these various governmental agencies and of the private organizations that are concerned with one or more aspects of the problem.

In social work there has been a tendency to become so preoccupied with problems of community organization in the field of social welfare that some of the similar activities in related fields have been less than fully appreciated. The trend appears to be in the direction of correcting this deficiency. The community organization process, though not called by that name, is constantly utilized by many groups in any community in the interest of a very wide range of differing objectives. Social workers have become increasingly aware of the skills that some of these groups have

developed. Moreover, they recognize that their objectives often are either entirely compatible with those of social work or, if incompatible, are conceivably subject to modification. Hence, there has been increasing recognition of the desirability of broadening the existing system of interrelationships. The skills and disciplines in legal, medical, and other professional groups, in labor unions, in commercial and industrial associations, in civic and political organizations, are often well developed and efficacious. From many of these bodies social workers can learn to improve their own methods. Moreover, they can reasonably hope that these other groups will increasingly turn to them to seek help in the solution of problems in which social work knowledge should be one of the important determinants. It was once said of the merit system of public employment that it should be extended "upward, downward, and outward." The community organization process in social welfare needs likewise to become increasingly the concern of groups not yet aware of its methods and purposes. The social work field will have more to offer such groups if, through increased research, analysis, and experimentation, it enlarges its own grasp of the process.

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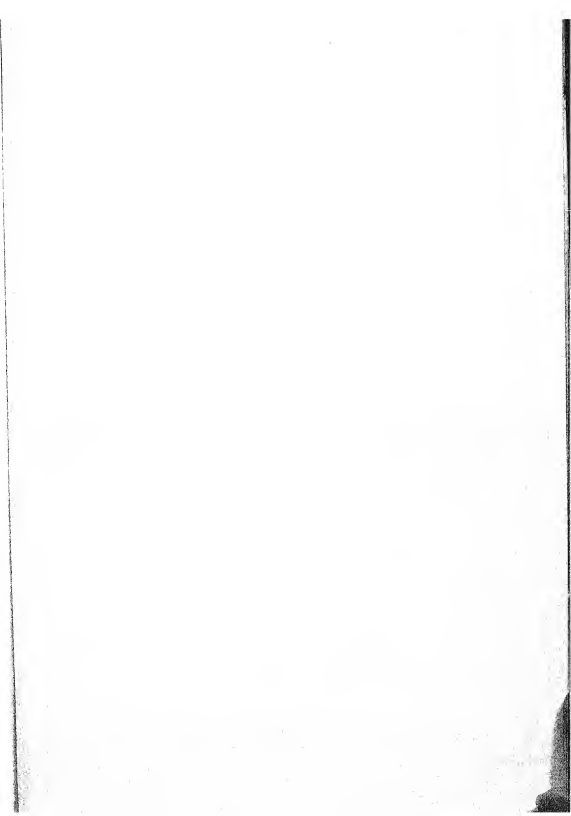


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